Mushoku Tensei

jobless reincarnation

art by
FUJIKAWA YUKA

story by
RIFUJIN NA MAGONOTE

character design by
SHIROTAKA

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CHAPTER 43
HALF-SISTERS



Mushoku Tensei 9
jobless reincarnation

art by YUKA FUJIKAWA
story by RIFUJIN NA MAGONOTE
original character design by SHIROTAKA

フゥゥ…

Heavenly one, bless us with the divine protection of fire...

Fierce tremors of fire, here and now--

Ahh…

Foo…

Ahh…

Fire Ball ...!

ボッ…

ゥゥゥ…

MAYBE THAT WAS A BIT TOO WEAK ...?

PLUP...

PLIP

KRAKL KRAKL KRAKL...

HWUUUH?!

OKAY, ONE MORE TIME.

Fire Ball...

BWOOM

S-SORRY, R-RUDEUS!!

OH, GOSH! I MELTED ALL THE SEALING WAX! WH-WHAT SHOULD I DO?!

PANIC

FWIP

HEH HEH HEH. DON'T WORRY! WE'VE GOT TONS MORE WHERE THAT CAME FROM.

LET'S GIVE IT ANOTHER SHOT!

YOU KNOW, THIS TAKES ME BACK TO MY DAYS AS A TUTOR.

IT DOES, DOESN'T IT?

THIS LETTER IS TO YOUR TEACHER, RIGHT?

SURE IS.

I WONDER IF I'LL TEACH MY LITTLE SISTERS MAGIC ONE DAY.

IT BRINGS BACK SO MANY MEMORIES...

BY THE WAY, RUDEUS.

Shirone Palace

ROXY'S AT THE CASTLE. I THOUGHT THAT MAYBE SHE COULD HELP.

I HEARD THAT MY FAMILY IS BEING HELD SOMEWHERE IN THE SHIRONE KINGDOM.

WRIGGLE

WRIGGLE

WRIGGLE

HEH HEH HEH...

WRIGGLE

LILIA AND AISHA~!

HOW SHALL YOU AMUSE US TODAY, MMM~?

.....

HE GAVE ME SOME MORE ADVICE, BECAUSE IT WAS "AMUSING."

It's been a while.

Hey.

WHEN I ARRIVED ON THE CENTRAL CONTINENT, HITOGAMI APPEARED IN MY DREAMS...

Send a letter to your acquaintance at the palace...

and you should be able to free them both!

Aisha and Lilia are captives in the Shirone Kingdom.

WHETHER I TRUST HITOGAMI OR NOT...

I FOLLOWED HIS ADVICE AND WROTE TO ROXY. IF NOTHING ELSE, I WANTED TO SEE HER.

I DID IT!

I BET THAT'S WHY I ENDED UP WITH IT IN THE FIRST PLACE. IT WAS ALL PART OF HITOGAMI'S PLAN...

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT HITOGAMI'S ADVICE CAME WITH VIDEO. BEAMED STRAIGHT INTO MY DEMON EYE.

NO. OUR FORMER MAID, MISS LILIA...

AND MY LITTLE SISTER AISHA, TOO. HER DAUGHTER.

HERE'S YOUR LETTER.

WHEN DID YOU HAVE THE TIME TO FIND OUT ABOUT YOUR FAMILY?

OH! AND YOU SAID FAMILY, BUT WHO? YOUR MOTHER?

I'M GLAD THAT ERIS UNDERSTANDS. MUST BE HER NOBLE UPBRINGING.

OHHH, THE MAID IS PAUL'S **MISTRESS!** THAT'S WHAT YOU MEANT.

PHEW!

WELL...

AISHA IS...HOW SHOULD I SAY IT? SHE'S MY HALF-SISTER...

THE *MAID'S* DAUGHTER IS YOUR LITTLE SISTER ...?

?

GULP...

WE WEREN'T EXACTLY CLOSE.

CLINK

MISS LILIA UNDERSTANDS HER PLACE...

AND I LEFT WHEN MY SISTERS WERE LITTLE, ALL SO THAT I COULD BE YOUR TUTOR, ERIS.

BUT THEY ARE A PART OF THE HOUSE-HOLD...

AND THEY'RE MY FAMILY.

RUDEUS'S FAMILY...

HA

SHAAA

H-HEY...

RUDEUS...

HMM? WHAT'S...

FIDGET...

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO TO BECOME A FAMILY...?

WHISPER

SHIFF

HUH ...?!!

BA-DUMP

BUT MAYBE MORE LIKE IN THE **MAKING BABIES** KIND OF--

It's normal for the Greyrat family!

Right?! My Lord Father? Lady Mother?

FLAP FLAP

PANIC

We're family, after all!!

Th-that's okay, Rudeus!!

PANIC

PANIC

I-I DON'T THINK SHE MEANS LIKE IN THE LET'S-GET-ALONG-AND-HAVE-A-BIRTHDAY-PARTY SENSE OF THE WORD...

NEIGH!

THE HORSES ARE RESTED.

WE SHOULD HEAD OUT.

JOLT

I-IT'S NOTHING! NOTHING AT ALL!!!

?

HMM?

WHAT'S WRONG? YOU TWO ARE STRANGELY QUIET.

?

KA-TUNK...

コ"ト

THAT CAUGHT ME OFF GUARD. IS ERIS... STARTING TO GET INTERESTED IN THAT STUFF...?

KA-TUNK

コ"ト

コ"ト

KA-TUNK

GLANCE

IT'S BEEN ABOUT TWO YEARS, SO... ACTUALLY... ERIS MIGHT BE OF AGE?!

I'M HER TUTOR, YES, BUT I CAN'T TEACH HER ABOUT THAT!

AND IT'S TOO SOON. HOW OLD IS SHE, ANYWAY?

TO THINK IT'S ALREADY BEEN TWO YEARS...

I BET SHE MISSES HER FAMILY. IT'S BEEN SO LONG.

SAUL AND THE OTHERS MUST BE DESPERATE TO SEE HER.

CLANG

CLANG

FIRST UP, LILIA AND AISHA!!

TAKING THINGS ONE STEP AT A TIME. TAKING BACK WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO US.

WE'RE GETTING CLOSER TO THE KINGDOM OF ASURA.

Central Continent

Shirone Kingdom: Latakia, the Capital City

KA-
TUNK

KA-
TUNK
KA-
TUNK
KA-
TUNK

CREAK
CREAK

I
WILL.

PLEASE...
TAKE THE
UTMOST
CARE.

YOU'LL
FIND THE
PERSON IN
QUESTION
ON THE
SECOND
FLOOR OF
THE INN.

YES,
PLEASE
COME
IN--

COULD
IT BE A
REPLY
FROM
ROXY?

KA-
CHAK

ONE
MO-
MENT.

EXCUSE
ME.

KNOCK
KNOCK

I'VE A
MESSAGE
FROM THE
PALACE.

UH...

DOWN
HERE.

GLANCE
GLANCE

ITTY ちっ

BITTY ちっ

EXCUSE ME!

I HAVE A MISSIVE FROM HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE SEVENTH PRINCE OF THE KINGDOM--PAX SHIRONE!!

THUMP

HE'S SO LITTLE! IS HE...FROM A DWARF RACE OR SOMETHING?

SIGH...

"SIGH" ...?

PLEASE, COME IN.

OH!

I CAN READ IT MYSELF!

UH, NO, THAT'S OKAY.

JOLT

SHALL I READ IT NOW?!

NOT A CHINK IN HIS ARMOR... ROYAL KNIGHTS ARE SO DISCIPLINED! THEY'RE AMAZING.

HMM...

WHAT? IS HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS GOING TO HELP YOU FIND YOUR FAMILY?

?

THERE WAS... THIS, AS WELL...

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

YOU WROTE TO YOUR OLD TEACHER ROXY, RIGHT?

A... PENDANT? AND...

IT SAYS... THE SEVENTH PRINCE "WISHES TO SEE ROXY'S APPRENTICE AT THE CASTLE"...

STRETCH

SPFFT!

ROXY'S PANTIES! TRULY A CHERISHED, PRECIOUS ARTIFACT FROM HOME...!

BUT WHY ARE THEY HERE...?!

SHOCK

I-IT'S NOTHING! *NOTHING!* AH HA HA!!

STARTLE

WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S IN THERE?

IT HAS INDEED BEEN A WHILE. THIS IS LILIA.

MASTER RUDEUS ...

SHWUFF...

MISS ROXY IS NOT HERE. ONLY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE PRINCE, WHO INTENDS TO ABUSE YOU.

YOU MUST NOT ACCEPT PRINCE PAX'S INVITATION.

I WRITE TO YOU WITH HASTE.

FROM YOUR LETTER TO MISS ROXY, I ASSUME THAT YOU ARE SAFE.

IT MAY BE INSOLENT FOR A MAID TO ASK, BUT I HAVE A REQUEST.

THWOMP

MY DAUGHTER AND I WERE DISPLACED TO SHIRONE. WE'VE BEEN DETAINED HERE EVER SINCE.

CLANK

HAVE YOU FINISHED READING?

WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF A KIND SOLDIER, I HAVE SENT YOU MY DAUGHTER.

PLEASE, FORGET ABOUT ME.

TAKE AISHA WITH YOU AND ESCAPE!!

SHWIFF

BEAM

MY MOTHER SAID YOU'RE A FRIEND OF MY FATHER'S. IS THAT RIGHT?

NICE TO MEET YOU!

THAT MEANS...

THIS KID IS AISHA!

BOW

I'M AISHA!

SMILE

BEAM

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT...SHE SPEAKS SO WELL!

IS SHE REALLY SIX?!

I DID MY BEST TO ACT LIKE A SOLDIER! HOW DID I DO?

NO, I AM...

IT'S SO NICE TO MEET YOU!

SHE SAID THAT YOU WOULD PROTECT ME!

I HOPE NOTHING HORRIBLE HAS HAPPENED TO HER...

EVEN IF SHE HAD HELP, SHE SMUGGLED HER DAUGHTER TO ME BEHIND PAX'S BACK.

SHE'S TAKING SOME SERIOUS RISKS. I MEAN...

MISS LILIA...

AND SO... UMM...

IF I TAKE AISHA UNDER MY WING, I'LL HAVE TO THINK ABOUT MY NEXT MOVE...

IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE ROXY'S HERE...

GLOW

HE WAS REALLY WORRIED ABOUT YOU BOTH.

PAUL'S WORKING TO HELP VICTIMS DISPLACED BY THE MAGICAL CALAMITY.

HOW IS... HOW IS FATHER...?

FIDGET...

OH, YES! AND NORN IS WITH PAUL, TOO. SHE'S SAFE AS WELL.

I'M...

FIDGET...

OKAY...

I'M SORRY, BUT I DON'T HAVE ANY INFOR-MATION ABOUT ZENITH...

LIAR!

THAT'S NOT IT...

I GET IT. FATHER ISN'T COMING TO SAVE US BECAUSE HE'S WITH BIG SISTER NORN...

I'M ONLY HIS *MIS-TRESS'S* KID...

IF HE CARED, FATHER WOULD HAVE COME TO SAVE US!!

MY SISTER NORN IS MORE IMPORTANT. THAT'S WHY HE ISN'T COMING!!

PLEASE SAVE MOTHER!

GRAB

HEY, PLEASE!

SHE TOLD ME THAT SHE WOULD ESCAPE LATER. THAT I SHOULD SEEK SAFETY FIRST. BUT SHE'S LYING!!

MOTHER IS GOING TO SACRIFICE HERSELF SO I CAN GET AWAY!!!

I...HAVE A HALF-BROTHER, BUT I HAVEN'T MET HIM BEFORE...

SHE EVEN FIGURED THAT OUT...

MY MOTHER IS ALL I HAVE!

NATURALLY, HE THINKS NORN IS MORE IMPORTANT, TOO!

PLEASE! SAVE HER! PLEASE!

WAAAAAAAAH!

HOW DO I EXPLAIN ALL THAT TO AISHA?

HIC...

HIC!

PAUL HAS NO WAY OF KNOWING ABOUT THEM, OR FINDING THEM...

I ONLY LEARNED ABOUT AISHA AND LILIA FROM HITOGAMI...

BEAM

PLEASE PRETEND THAT YOU DIDN'T HEAR ANY OF IT!

I...I'M SORRY TO PUT YOU ON THE SPOT LIKE THAT.

GLOP...

EXCUSE ME, I MUST GO AND WASH MY FACE.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, RUDEUS?

IT'S ALL TURNED PRETTY COMPLI-CATED, HASN'T IT?

KA-CLUNK...

SHE HASN'T REALIZED WHO I AM. IT LOOKS LIKE SHE ALREADY HATES HER BROTHER, EVEN THOUGH SHE'S NEVER MET HIM.

IT SEEMS MISS LILIA WANTS ME TO TAKE AISHA AND RUN.

THIS KID'S SO SMART...

HER INFERIORITY COMPLEX ABOUT BEING A MISTRESS'S DAUGHTER HAS ONLY GOTTEN WORSE.

I SEE... BUT AISHA DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT...

IT'S NOT GOOD.

EVEN IF AISHA IS REUNITED WITH HER FAMILY, SHE WOULDN'T EVER BE ABLE TO RELY ON US.

I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING! I'M HER BIG BROTHER...

GRIT...

AND IF I KNOW MISS LILIA...

SHE'S TAUGHT AISHA TO KNOW HER PLACE, TO ALWAYS GRIN AND BEAR IT.

EVEN THOUGH SHE'S ONLY SIX YEARS OLD...

DO YOU TWO HAVE A MINUTE?

BUT WHAT CAN I DO? IF I TELL AISHA THAT I'M HER BROTHER, SHE'LL PROBABLY GET ALL CONFUSED...

OH...

PAFF

THAT IS... UM... ABOUT THAT, UH...

AISHA.

I'M SORRY TO HAVE KEPT YOU WAITING, MR. FRIEND.

KA-CHAK...

AND THAT'S WHY WE'LL GRANT YOUR REQUEST!

BECAUSE WE HELP OTHERS IN NEED.

MISS LILIA EN-TRUSTED YOU TO US...

YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT I'M THE MASTER OF "DEAD END"!

I'LL DEFINITELY RESCUE MISS LILIA FOR YOU!

SPARKLE ☆ THE RUDEUS SMILE!

JUST LEAVE IT TO US!

WHAT?! BUT...

...!

THANK YOU SO MUCH, MR. MASHTER !!

GOOD.

WE'RE HEADED TO THE SHIRONE PALACE-- TO RESCUE MISS LILIA!!

ALL RIGHT! LET'S GO!

I DON'T CARE ABOUT MYSELF, AS LONG AS MY FAMILY IS HAPPY!

IF IT HELPS AISHA, I'LL GIVE UP BEING HER BIG BROTHER.

JANGLE JANGLE CLICK

INSIDE THE SHIRONE PALACE

JANGLE

MS. LILIA.

CHAPTER 44

LILIA'S RESCUE

THEN AISHA IS... THANK YOU...!

PLEASE RAISE YOUR HEAD.

EVERYONE IN THE IMPERIAL GUARD HAS SEEN MORE THAN ENOUGH OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS'S INDULGENT BEHAVIOR.

SIR GINGER.

COME NOW. NO NEED FOR TITLES.

THAT THING WE SPOKE OF? IT IS DONE.

KA-CLUNK

Ginger York
IMPERIAL GUARD

I ONLY WONDER... ARE YOU SURE?

DO YOU *KNOW* THAT RUDEUS WON'T TELL AISHA THAT HE'S HER BROTHER ...?

.....

HOWEVER, I'VE NOT A DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT SHE WILL REALIZE HOW WONDERFUL HE IS IMMEDIATELY UPON MEETING HIM.

BUT...

THUS, I TOOK CARE TO EXTOL HIS VIRTUES AND BUILD A POSITIVE IMPRES-SION.

I'D LONG INTENDED FOR AISHA TO SERVE MASTER RUDEUS.

This is what's **amazing** about him! He could use magic at the tender age of three!

Wondrous Things about Master Rudeus

The Top Ten!!

IF YOU DON'T COME FORTHWITH... YOU'LL GET IT! WE'LL DO IT, AND DON'T YOU DOUBT US!!

HEY, LILIA!! APPEAR BEFORE US, POST-HASTE!!

HOWEVER, MY DAUGHTER REBELLED. SHE DIDN'T BELIEVE A PERSON THAT PERFECT COULD EXIST.

PLEASE, BE CAREFUL.

MISS LILIA...

AS YOU WISH...

CLACK

THAT'S THE PALACE. MISS LILIA IS IN THERE...

CRUNCH...

IX-NAY ON THE LIDEUS-RAY!!!

THEN, HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET IN, RU--

MURPH ?!

IT'S AS WELL-GUARDED AS YOU'D EXPECT.

OH! OH! MR. MASHTER!

I-I GOT IT! I *GOT* IT ALREADY!

BICKER

WHISPER

COME ON, ERIS! I TOLD YOU, IN FRONT OF AISHA, I'M--

WHISPER

BICKER

WHISPER

OF COURSE! YOU WILL SURELY REACH MY MOTHER FASTEST IF I GO WITH YOU!

WHAT?! YOU THINK YOU'RE COMING TOO?!

BOING

I WAS MORE OR LESS FREE WHILE I WAS... HOW DO YOU SAY IT... DEE-TAYNED, SO...

I KNOW A WHOLE BUNCH OF SECRET PATHS!

I MEAN, OUR LAST SHRED OF HOPE, RU... OR RATHER, *MASTER'S* TEACHER, ISN'T HERE. SO WHY NOT BRING THE KID ALONG?

B... BUT...

ERIS ?!

IT'S FINE, ISN'T IT?

HEH HEH..

MAN, YOU'RE SCARY !!

IF SOMETHING HAPPENS, LET ME KNOW WITH MAGIC. IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I STORMED A CASTLE... I'M ITCHING FOR A CHANCE.

ET TU, RUIJERD ?!

RUB RUB...

HMM... IT SHOULD BE FINE. I'LL STAY HERE. GO THEN.

OH... BUT MR. GARDOG IS BIG AND MIGHT STICK OUT...

Guard Dog

UNNNGH.

UNNNGH.

UNNNNNGH...

UNGH, ERIS HAS A POINT, BUT WHAT DO I DO...?

THERE AREN'T VERY MANY GUARDS ON THIS SIDE!

QUIT TALKING AND START MOVING !!!

WHOA-AAAAA !!

TMP

TMP

TMP ...

TMP..

YIIIKES ...!

DO YOU LIKE MY SECRET PATH?!

SKSH

SKSH

SKSH

OOOOF!

GLANCE

GOT IT!

PLEASE GO RIGHT AT THE NEXT CORNER, THEN UP THE STAIRS!

.....

WOW, AREN'T YOU SOMETHING, AISHA!

HE DOESN'T WORRY ABOUT THE DANGER! HE'S DOING ALL THIS, JUST FOR MY SAKE...

MR. MASHTER IS SO KIND.

※Aisha-Vision

RUFFLE RUFFLE

!

YOU ARE REALLY AN AMAZING KID!

WE'VE MADE IT PRETTY FAR WITHOUT BEING DISCOVERED. AND IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU.

WHAT?

SMILE...

H-HE SAID I DID GOOD.

I-I DID!

IF ONLY HE WAS MY BIG BROTHER...

ALAS...

SQUEEZE...

LET'S GO!

JUST A LITTLE FARTHER, ISN'T IT?

MOVE OVER ONTO MY BACK, OKAY?

IT'S IMPOS-SIBLE...

NO, NO! DON'T THINK ABOUT STUFF LIKE THAT.

THE IMPERIAL GUARD STATION IS HERE, SO BE CARE--

OH! PLEASE WAIT!

SHING

WHO ARE YOU?! WHERE DID YOU--

Eep!

Stone Cannon !!!

SHWANG!!!

HUMPH.

I THOUGHT THEY WERE JUST GRUNTS, BUT HE'S PRETTY GOOD!!

YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING ME!!

WAS THAT VOICE-LESS MAGIC?

AND ISN'T THAT LITTLE AISHA ON HIS BACK?!

THEN THAT MEANS YOU'RE ...!

WHAT ...?!

RUDEUS!! DUCK!!!

RUDEUS ...?!

HYU-GRANK

DO-KAN

HU

THUMP

KI!

UGH...

GRUNCH...

MASTER! NOW'S YOUR CHANCE!

Y...

YEAH!

TURN

THAT WAS VOICELESS MAGIC... HE MUST BE MISS ROXY'S APPRENTICE.

WAIT.

DAMN! WE NEED BACKUP ...

DASH!!

THONK

...

CLACK

THEIR TARGET MUST BE...

WELL, IF IT ISN'T GINGER.

HMM?

THIS...

THIS IS...!

Y-YOUR LORD-SHIP ...!

THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME COMMOTION HERE. WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?

TMP

TMP

TMP

TMP

.....

ARE THEY CHASING US?!

HUFF! HUFF!

NO, I DON'T THINK SO.

MR. MASHTER... SHE CALLED YOU "RUDEUS"...

"Do you under-stand, Aisha?

IS THIS PERSON MY BIG BROTHER ...?!

"One day, you will be assigned...

"to the eldest son of the Greyrat family, Master Rudeus."

I THINK HE IS. I HATE MY BIG BROTHER, SO MOTHER KEPT HIS IDENTITY A SECRET...

"I hate you, and my big brother Rudeus!!"

"Why do you just decide everything like that, Mother?!

HE MUST HAVE REALIZED WHO I AM.

SO WHY DIDN'T HE TELL ME?

BUT THEN... WHY?

Of course, he thinks Norn is more important, too!

My Mother is all I have!

OH...

SQUEEZE...

MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE I SAID ALL THOSE THINGS...

HUFF!

HUFF!

HUFF!

HUFF!

HUFF!

AISHA!

AI...

HE PROBABLY KNOWS THAT I HATE MY BROTHER, WHEN I'VE NEVER EVEN MET HIM...

YES... LIM...

CALM DOWN, CALM DOWN...

Y- YES?!

DO YOU KNOW WHERE MISS LILIA IS?

ROGER!

MOTHER WAS OFTEN CALLED TO THAT ROOM, THERE. THE SECOND DOOR DOWN.

OOH, YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS! PLEASE FORGIVE ME!

TA-TUP

FWSH

NGH...

THEN WE SHALL SEE YOUR DAUGHTER TAKE YOUR PLACE!

HEH HEH... ARE YOU SURE? IF YOU WON'T DO IT...

IS THAT MISS LILIA'S VOICE ...?!

SKULK...

L-LIKE THIS ...?

HAAH... HAAH...

PWAP PWAP

AS... AS YOU WISH.

IF YOU UNDER-STAND, THEN YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO.

HEY!!! HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, PRINCE PERV!

THWAM

BIG BR... MR. MASHTER ...?

MMM... HO HO HO...!

WELL DONE ...

WELL DONE, INDEED ...!

L...

LOVE-A-DUB-DUB! SQUEE-EEZE!

GRRRR...

HIDE

?!

L... LOVE-A-DUB-DUB... HEART...!

I'LL MAKE IT EXTRA YUMMY FOR YOU, OKAY?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK, MASTER!

HERE IS YOUR TEA.

WIGGLE

FLUTTER

WROOONG! DO IT AGAIN, WITH THE BIGGEST SMILE YOU'VE GOT!! AND YOUR HANDS GO LIKE THIS! IT'S "LOVE-A-DUB-DUB! HEART HANDS!!!"

NOW DO IT AGAIN!!

BWOING

Gasp!

AND COULD YOU BE RU--

AISHA, WHY ARE YOU HERE?!

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?!

IT TICKLES OUR INNER SADIST! ...WAIT.

BWA HA HA HA HAA!!! WELL DONE, LILIA. YOUR EXPRESSION, STEEPED IN SHAME...

OH! UM. HELLO. THIS IS CERTAINLY NOT WHAT YOU THINK!

WE ARE CERTAINLY NOT INTERESTED IN SUCH AN OLD HAG. CERTAINLY NOT! WE ARE JUST BORED. THAT'S ALL!!

SHIVER

SHIVER...

SHIVER

かあああ BLUSH...

JOLT

YOU SHALL NOT HAVE YOUR DASTARDLY WAY! SOMEONE! COME, COME...

?!

KRIK

KRIK KRAK

PHEW... YOU ARE NOT A FAMILIAR FACE, ARE YOU?

AHA! MIGHT YOU BE AN ASSASSIN ?!

YOU SCOUNDREL! HOW DARE YOU TARGET ONE SO WISE AND BEAUTEOUS AS US!

YOU THINK YOU CAN PLAY WITH MISS LILIA ?!!

Oh my!

BA-DUMP

HEY, YOU!! WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING WITH THAT?!

KRAKL

KRAKL

KRAKL

YOU ...

STOP! PLEASE !!

Stone Cannon !!!!

YOU GET ME ALL HOT AND BOTHERED TO BARGE IN ON SOME XXX ACTION, AND YOU'RE INTO THIS?!

BA-BOOM !!!

EYAAAAGH!

THA-THOOM...

HUH...

IS THAT THE SIGNAL ...?

CAN'T TELL. I'M SO GOING TO GUESS NOT.

SCREW HIM. LET'S FORGET THAT FOOL AND MAKE OUR ESCAPE!!

OOH, MASTER RUDEUS... YOU DID NOT THINK OF YOURSELF, OR THE DANGER, YOU CAME TO RESCUE A LOWLY MAID...!!

WINK

I SHALL SERVE YOU FOR ETERNITY !!!

GASP!

SHH.

RU--

.....

AISHA, WE SHALL SPEAK OF THIS LATER.

MOTHER ...

PAT TER PAT TER PAT TER...

HMM...

FLUMP

GASP!

THE ONLY MAGIC OF THAT CALIBER WE HAVE SEEN BEFORE IS ROXY'S.

WHAT SORT OF MAGIC WAS THAT?!

GRRR...

ROXY'S APPRENTICE, **RUDEUS!** THE ONE SHE ALWAYS WENT ON ABOUT!

THAT VOICELESS MAGIC... THAT MEANS THAT HE'S...

SIGH...

GIIINGERRR!

GINGER!!!

THERE'S AN INTRUDER! RUDEUS HAS STOLEN LILIA!

WHAT ARE THOSE SOLDIERS DOING?!

WHATEVER SHMUTEVER !!

YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS, WHATEVER COULD...

POINT

BWA HA HA HA!

CAPTURE THEM FORTHWITH AND BRING THEM BEFORE US!!

ROXY'S FORMER PARAMOUR, IS HE?! WE SHALL CATCH HIM, TEAR HIM TO PIECES, AND TORTURE HIM WITH OUR OWN HANDS!!

AND I AM TERRIBLY UNLUCKY.

I AM AISHA GREYRAT...

CHAPTER 45

SISTERLY LOYALTY

I SHOULD BE ABLE TO DECIDE ON THE PERSON MYSELF.

IF I HAVE TO SERVE SOMEONE ...

WHAT AM I TO THE GREYRAT FAMILY, ANYWAY?

MY MOTHER HAMMERED IT INTO ME.

IT WAS DECIDED EVEN BEFORE I WAS BORN THAT I WAS TO SERVE MY OLDER BROTHER. BUT I DON'T EVEN KNOW HIM.

AND FOR THE FIRST TIME, I REALIZED HOW MUCH SHE **LOVED** ME.

SHE FOUGHT DESPERATELY TO KEEP ME SAFE FROM THE SOLDIERS...

BEFORE I KNEW IT, I WAS IN AN ODD CASTLE WITH MOTHER.

THAT'S WHAT I WAS THINKING WHEN A STRANGE LIGHT ENGULFED ME.

Please save Mother!

GRAB

Hey, please!

THAT'S WHY I ASKED FATHER'S FRIEND...MR. MASHTER, TO SAVE HER.

RUFFLE RUFFLE

You are really an amazing child!

I HAVE NO IDEA HOW I COULD HAVE SAID SOMETHING SO SELFISH, BUT...

...quit talking and start moving !!!

Whoaa-aaaa!!

MR. MASHTER DID HIS BEST FOR ME.

Huff!

DO YOU LIKE MY SECRET PATH?! SKSH SKSH SKSH

OOOOF!

HE WAS MY BIG BROTHER...

IF ONLY...

BUT HE WOULDN'T TELL ME.

HE REALLY WAS MY BIG BROTHER...

Rude-us!

Duck!

THAT'S WHAT I WAS THINKING ...

HE DOESN'T...

THIS IS THE WAY!

THAT'S WHY...

I'M A BAD GIRL.

IT'S PROBABLY BECAUSE I SAID BAD THINGS ABOUT THE GREYRATS... ABOUT HIM.

CLACK CLACK CLACK

THERE'S A SERVANTS' ENTRANCE BACK HERE!

EEK!

AISHA? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? YOU DON'T LOOK SO WELL.

BUT THAT PINCH WE WERE IN JUST NOW?

FOR THE MASTER OF DEAD END, IT'S ALL IN A DAY'S WORK.

SMIRK...

JUST LEAVE EVERYTHING TO US. DON'T WORRY!

I DRAGGED YOU INTO SOME SERIOUS TROUBLE HERE, AND I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT.

IT'S... NOTHING...

ACK! THEY CAUGHT UP!

THE INTRUD-ERS!!

THERE THEY ARE!

.....

DUN DUN

YOU MUST CAPTURE THEM !!!

PANT! WHEEZE! HAAAH!

OUR HONOR IS AT STAKE!

OKAY, IMPERIAL GUARDS!

WE, THE IMPERIAL GUARD, SHALL STOP YOU!

SHING

R-RESIGN YOUR-SELF TO YOUR FATE!

SIGH...

WHAT?! WH-WHAT ABOUT YOU, MR. MASHTER ?!

MISS LILIA, PLEASE TAKE AISHA AND ESCAPE!

SHING

I...

NO... ACTUALLY... THIS IS WHERE WE MAKE OUR STAND! IT'S TIME WE WIN A NAME FOR OURSELVES!!!

Stone Cannon !!!

I KNEW IT! THESE SOLDIERS WON'T BE FAZED BY VOICELESS MAGIC.

ERIS !!!

HH

NGH!

ZWUNCH

SWISH

CLANG

CLANG

GWAM

DD

CLANG

KA-TANG

DD

KSH...

URGH... THIS GIRL CAN FIGHT...!

SWISH

Stone Bullet !!!

Air Burst !!!

PANG

RUB...

THEY ARE BUT JOURNEY-MEN IN THE STYLE OF THE WATER GOD...

BUT ROXY HAS SPECIALLY TRAINED THEM IN MAGICAL COUNTER-MEASURES.

HAAA HA HA HA!!! HOW GOES IT? STRAPPING, ARE THEY NOT?! OUR SOLDIERS?!

TH... THANKS ...

BWAAAH HA HA HA HA HA!!!

ARE YOU NOT VEXED?

HUBRIS...

YOUR PUNY MAGIC SHALL AVAIL YOU NAUGHT !!

THAT IS MOST CERTAINLY NOT THE REACTION WE DESIRED !!!

YOU GOT THAT RIGHT! ONCE AGAIN, ROXY HAS PROVED HERSELF THE GREATEST INSTRUCTOR ALIVE!

LOOKS LIKE WE CAN LEARN A THING OR TWO FROM THEM!

OOH, THAT MAKES SENSE! I WOULDN'T EXPECT ANY LESS OF RU--I MEAN, OF MASTER'S TEACHER!

KSH...

TAKE THIS...

ARGH! GINGER!

YES, SIRE ...!

CAPTURE THEM, POSTHASTE!

THESE PEOPLE... COULD THEY BE...?!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING, YOU WORTH-LESS FOOL?!

IF WE STAY, WE'LL ONLY GET IN THE WAY.

IT WILL BE ALL RIGHT. AFTER ALL, HE'S--

BUT, MOTHER!

AISHA! OVER HERE, QUICKLY!

M-MR. MASHTER ...

AT THIS RATE, MR. MASHTER WILL LOSE!

THEY'RE PUSHING EVERYONE BACK...!

MR. MASHTER IS IN DANGER BECAUSE I'M SPOILED AND BAD...!

I DIDN'T LISTEN TO YOU, MOTHER. *I'M* THE ONE WHO ASKED HIM TO COME HERE...!

WHAT'LL I DO THEN?!

AISHA ...?!

I'LL NEVER BE A CHILD OF THE GREYRATS!

AT THIS RATE, I'LL LOSE MY MOTHER AND MY BIG BROTHER!

I WAS GREEDY, EVEN THOUGH I'M JUST A MAID'S DAUGHTER. NOW EVERY-ONE IS IN DANGER...!

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

BUT...

WHAT ELSE COULD I HAVE DONE?!

AISHA...

GLARE

HUMPH...

I KNEW YOU WOULD SCURRY HERE...

OH...

IT'S YOU ...!

HEY! GINGER!! ENOUGH ALREADY !!

IF WE CAN JUST FIND A CRACK IN THEIR DEFENSES, WE COULD ESCAPE...

DO YOU HAVE ANY INTENTION OF DOING YOUR JOB?!

I CAN TELL YOU'RE LOLLY-GAGGING!

WHISPER

WHISPER

RUDEUS, THESE SOLDIERS ...

SO YOU NOTICED, TOO?

WELL, WELL. SO YOU ARE RUDEUS?

LOOM

HUH?

?!

ノーニ SLAM

ANSWER ME FRANKLY.

I HAVE A QUESTION FOR YOU.

SHUFF...

LOOK HERE...

FWIP

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN THESE DOLLS BEFORE?

DO YOU KNOW THE IDENTITY OF THEIR CREATOR?

SLAP

ぉ'ぃ'

THAT'S RIGHT!! WITH EARTH MAGIC!

TWITCH

WHAT? MADE ...?

SHIVER SHIVER

J-JUST A MINUTE, ERIS...

DON'T BLAB ABOUT IT TO THIS WHO-EVER-HE-IS GUY...

HUH? MY FIG-URES ...

DANG! THEY'RE GONE...

WHY DOES THIS WEIRDO HAVE THEM?!

OH, THOSE! YOU MADE THOSE DOLLS, DIDN'T YOU, RUDEUS?!

WHAAAA?!!

HNNNNGH!

SPROING

SPROING

JOLT

WHOOOMP

SKSHHHH

DOUUN

WHAT-
THE
HELL
?!!

OH
MY
GOOOOD
!!!!

YOU
ARE THE
ARTIST
WHO
BROUGHT
THESE
DOLLS
TO
LIFE?!

MY LORD
BROTHER!
THAT IS AN
INTRUDER!

A KNAVE
WHO WE
SHALL
PUNISH
WITH OUR
OWN
HANDS!

GRIN

N-NO
THANKS
... U

PLEASE,
ALLOW
ME TO
CALL YOU
MASTER.

WHAT'S
WITH HIM...?
IS
SHIRONE
FULL OF
WEIRDOS?

RAWR!

WHAT
THE
HELLLLL
?!!!

DU-DUUUN

CANNOT
BE A
KNAVE!
AM I
WRONG
?!!

WHAT
ARE YOU
SAYING,
PAX?!!!
SUCH A
MAN, WHO
BROUGHT
SUCH
EXQUISITE
DOLLS
TO
LIFE...

EEEEK! SCARY! TOO SCARY! AWAY WITH YOU!! AWAY WITH YOU, MY LORD BROTHERR!!!

ZOOOM

SHOW THIS MOST ESTEEMED GENTLEMAN THE HOSPITALITY HE IS DUE!

PAAAX!!! CALL OFF YOUR SOLDIERS AT ONCE!!!

NOW... SIR RUDEUS. LISTEN.

clop clop... clop...

I GUESS THEY DON'T GET ALONG?

LORD... BROTHER? SO THEY'RE SIBLINGS?

TOTTER TOTTER TOTTER

EEEEEEK...! STUMBLE STAGGER...

BOWooo

PLEASE FORGIVE HIM.

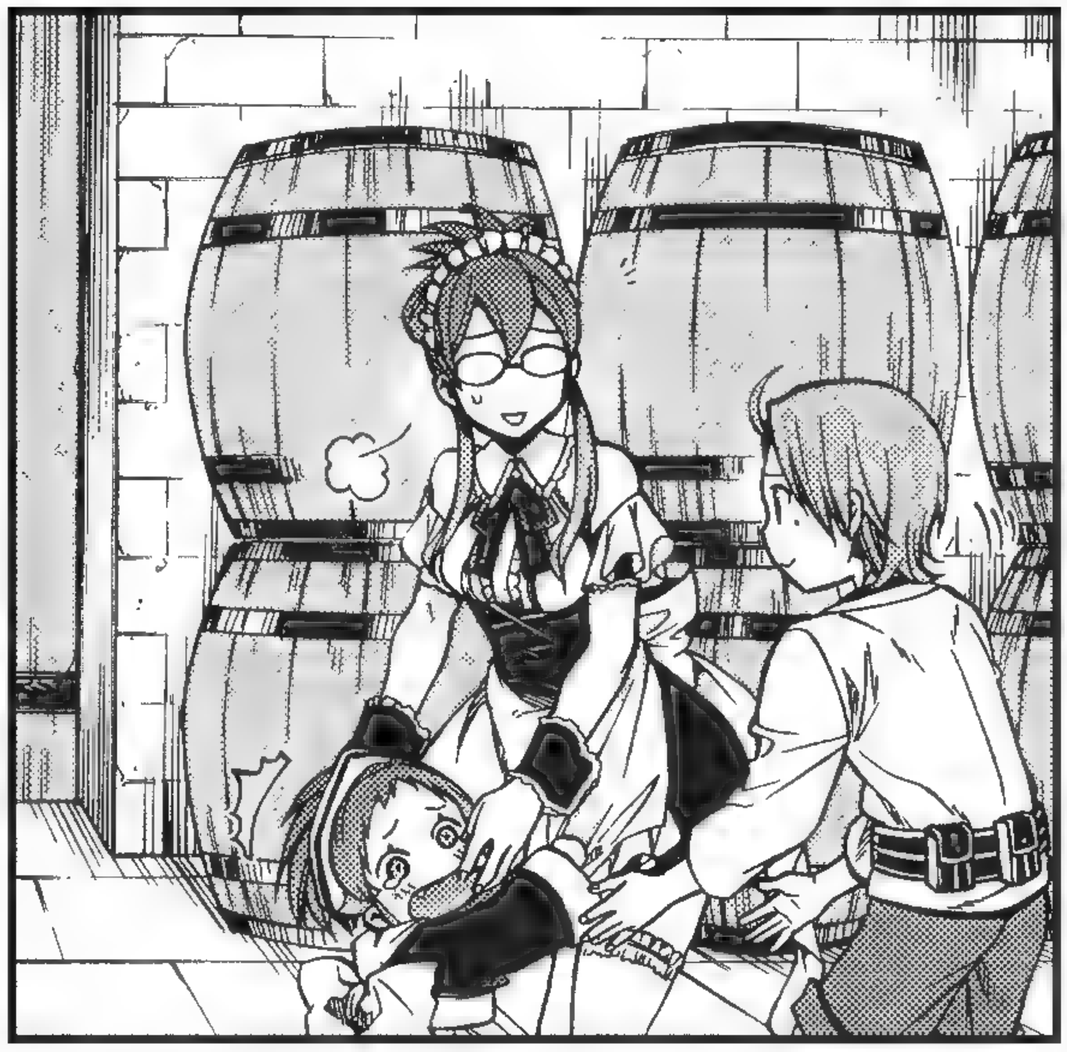
OUR SPOILED, PAMPERED PRINCE HAS BEEN A DREADFUL BOOR.

THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO ESCAPE. GO THROUGH THE BACK.

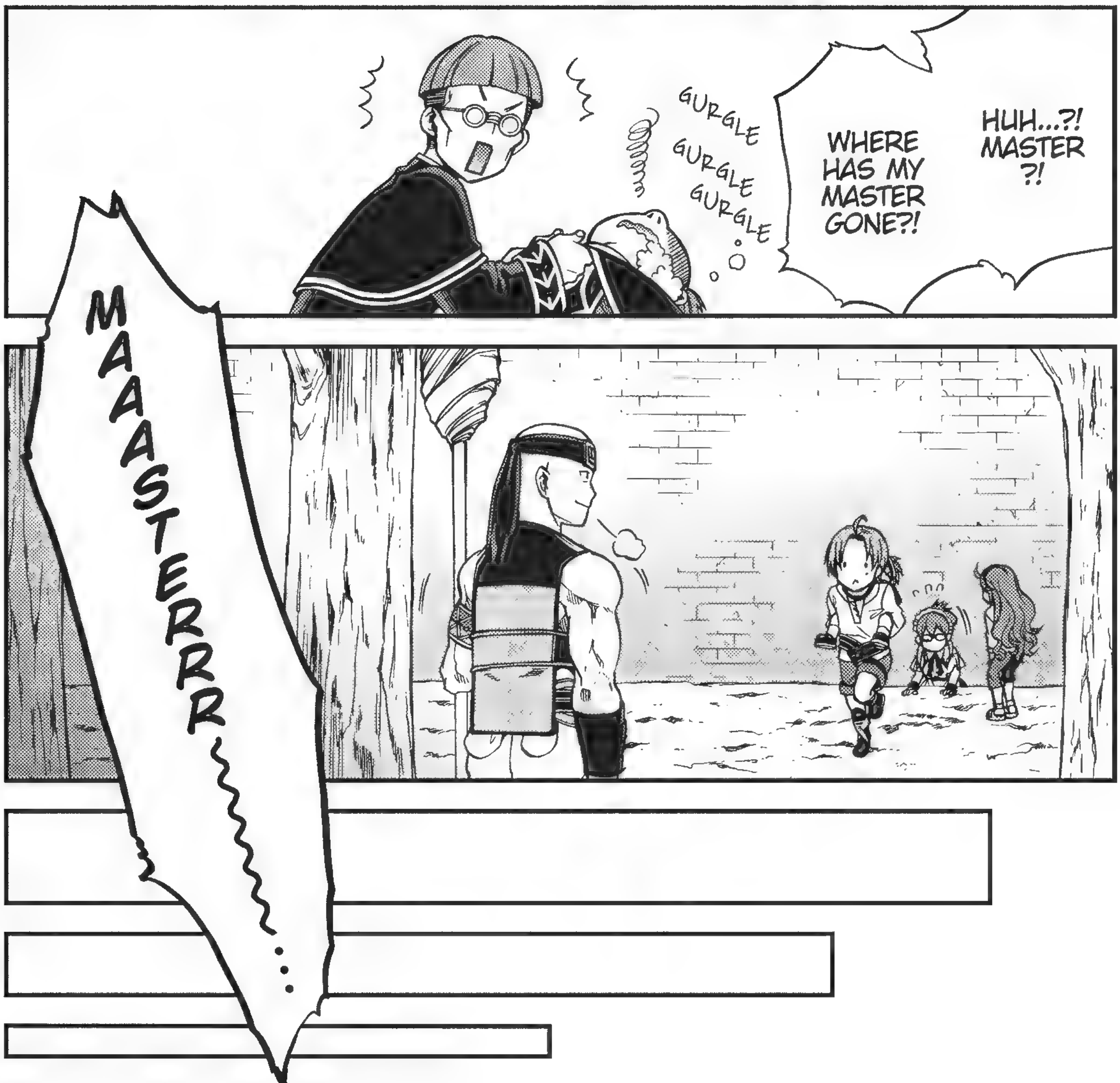
WE'LL TAKE CARE OF THE REST... SOMEHOW.

HUH?

OH... I KNEW IT...! YOU GUYS...






GURGLE
GURGLE
GURGLE
WHERE HAS MY MASTER GONE?!
HUH...?! MASTER ?!
MAASTERR~

SO, YOU AND AISHA ENDED UP IN SHIRONE AFTER THE DISPLACE-MENT DISASTER...

ALL BECAUSE HE THOUGHT THAT HE COULD USE YOU AS BAIT TO LURE ROXY OUT. I GET THAT RIGHT?

AND PAX HELD YOU FOR TWO YEARS...

I SEE...

IT SEEMS THAT PAX THOUGHT THAT MISS ROXY WAS SKILLED ENOUGH TO FIND US, EVEN WITHOUT LEAKING ANY INFORMATION...

BUT WE DIDN'T FIND OUT ANYTHING ABOUT YOU UNTIL WE ENTERED THIS KINGDOM...

YOU SAID HE WANTED TO USE YOU AS BAIT...

YES... HE ALSO SUSPECTED THAT WE MIGHT BE SPIES...

WE MANAGED TO STAY OUT OF JAIL BY MENTIONING MASTER PAUL AND MISS ROXY.

HA HA HA

PLEASE STOP PUTTING YOURSELF DOWN LIKE THAT, MISS LILIA.

KA-CHAK

WE'RE *FAMILY.* REMEMBER THAT.

MASTER RUDEUS...

CREAK

NO, IT'S FINE, ERIS.

OH... SORRY, MAYBE THIS IS A BAD TIME...

WHISPER

Paff

UH... YEAH...

THANKS FOR KEEPING MY NAME A SECRET...

I NEED TO TALK TO AISHA.

WELL NOW... IT'S ABOUT TIME.

TWITCH

AISHA.

YOU'RE RUDEUS GREYRAT.

YOU'RE MY BIG BROTHER RUDEUS, AREN'T YOU?

I AM--

LET ME FORMALLY INTRO-DUCE MYSELF.

I KNOW.

SO... YOU FIGURED IT OUT.

YES. I AM AISHA GREYRAT.

DAUGHTER OF PAUL AND LILIA, AND YOUR LITTLE SISTER.

SCRITCH

YEAH, I KNOW TH--

THEN WHY DIDN'T YOU *TELL* ME WHEN WE MET?!

BECAUSE I'M A MISTRESS'S KID, AND SAID BAD THINGS ABOUT YOU?

SO NOW YOU CAN'T ACKNOWLEDGE ME AS YOUR LITTLE SISTER?!

YOU REALLY ARE AMAZING, AREN'T YOU, AISHA?

CLATTER

AISHA ...!

SWF

THERE'S NO WAY I CAN BE HIS LITTLE SISTER...

I KNEW IT.

BUT YOU GOT SOMETHING WRONG.

GULP...

OR EVEN A TOTAL STRANGER, LIKE THE MASTER OF DEAD END.

IT DOESN'T MATTER IF I'M YOUR BIG BROTHER RUDEUS...

I DON'T CARE WHO I AM.

AISHA, IF I'M GOING TO BE SOMEONE YOU CAN TRUST AND DEPEND ON...

AISHA.

YOU'RE STILL LITTLE, BUT YOU'VE HAD A LOT TO DEAL WITH, HAVEN'T YOU?

WHAT ...?

NO MATTER WHAT YOU THINK OF ME...

I DON'T WANT YOU TO HAVE TO DEAL WITH IT ALL ALONE. I WANT YOU TO FEEL AT EASE. TO DEPEND ON ME.

YOU'LL ALWAYS BE MY CUTE, PRECIOUS LITTLE SISTER.

RAAWR!

REALLY! DO YOU WANT ME TO EXPLAIN AGAIN FROM THE BEGINNING ?!

REALLY ...?

BUT YOU WERE BORN WITH A STRONG, HEALTHY CRY!

IT WAS QUITE A BIT BEFORE HER DUE DATE, SO I WAS REALLY WORRIED!

IT WAS A BRIGHT AND SUNNY DAY, RIGHT AFTER MY MOTHER ZENITH HAD NORN, WHEN MISS LILIA WENT INTO LABOR!

AISHA...

IF HE'D STAYED, MAYBE THINGS WOULDN'T HAVE WOUND UP SO TWISTED.

I DIDN'T KNOW ANY OF THIS... THIS WAS WHEN HE WAS STILL LIVING AT HOME...

YOU DON'T KNOW HOW HAPPY I WAS TO HAVE TWO LITTLE SISTERS ALL OF A SUDDEN!

DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU'RE SO UNLUCKY?

WHEN YOU ENDED UP AT SHIRONE PALACE, THE PEOPLE... ESPECIALLY THE SOLDIERS... WERE NICE TO YOU, WEREN'T THEY?

NGH!

IF YOU DO, THEN YOU'RE MISTAKEN.

KSH-

Take this ...!

I... I THOUGHT SOME-THING WAS ODD...

I KNEW IT.

AND THAT IMPERIAL GUARD, GINGER, WENT EASY ON US DURING THE BATTLE.

H- HOW DID YOU...

BECAUSE IF THEY WEREN'T...

YOU WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO WALK AROUND FREELY.

"Don't let the Prince find out, okay?"

"Aisha, dear, would you like a little snack?"

"Sorry you have to suffer like this, little Aisha."

"Aisha darling, you take care, okay?"

"You really aren't supposed to be here, but...well, it's okay, I guess."

OH...

AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT BEING A MISTRESS'S CHILD.

YOU AREN'T UNLUCKY...

SQUEEZE

NO MATTER WHAT ANYONE SAYS, AISHA GREYRAT IS MY CUTE AND PRECIOUS LITTLE SISTER.

NOW I'VE GOT A QUESTION FOR YOU.

SO...

WHICH ONE SHALL I BE?

OR "THE MASTER OF DEAD END"...

"BIG BROTHER RUDEUS"...

NGH...

SNIFFLE!

SHE'S...

JUST LIKE MISS LILIA...

PLEASE.

AISHA...

BE AISHA GREYRAT'S BIG BROTHER.

BE MY BIG BROTHER RUDEUS ...!!

GLADLY!

THANK YOU, BIG BROTHER!

I LOVE YOU!!

WE TALKED ABOUT ALL KINDS OF THINGS.

THAT DAY, AS IF TO MAKE UP FOR ALL THE LOST YEARS...

AISHA AND I GREW CLOSE.

WOW, SO YOU ENDED UP ON THE DEMON CONTINENT, BIG BROTHER?

THAT'S RIGHT. YOU CAN'T IMAGINE HOW HARD IT WAS!

HMM?

OH, THAT'S RIGHT. RUDEUS?

I KNOW THAT YOU'RE REALLY STRONG AND COOL AND DEPEND-ABLE...

OKAY!

WHOOPS! IT'S LATE NOW, AISHA. LET'S GO TO BED.

WHISPER...

BUT I DO HAVE TO WONDER WHY YOU HAVE ALL THAT RELIGIOUS ZEAL FOR YOUR *TUTOR'S UNDIES...*

PHBBT!

SIBLINGS, EH...?

Zzz Zzz Zzz...

THIS BRIGHT LITTLE SISTER OF MINE... IS GOING TO TWIST ME AROUND HER LITTLE FINGER...

AISHA!

NIGHTY-NIGHT!

YEAH... THIS IS WHAT IT TRULY MEANS TO HAVE SIBLINGS.

GOOD NIGHT, AISHA.

TWEET

TWEET

TWEET...

CHAPTER 46

TURNING POINT II — BEGINNING

I HOPE THAT, WHEN WE FIND HER, WE CAN ALL LIVE TOGETHER.

THE ONLY MEMBER OF MY FAMILY STILL MISSING IS ZENITH.

IT'D BE SO MUCH FUN IF SYLPHIE AND ROXY WERE THERE!

OH, THAT'S RIGHT!

I'LL ASK RUIJERD AND ERIS TO COME TOO, AND--

IN MY PREVIOUS LIFE, I NEVER ONCE THOUGHT THAT FAMILY GATHERINGS WERE FUN.

YOU KNOW, IT'S STRANGE...

MASTER RUDEUS.

I GUESS IT'S GOODBYE FOR NOW, THEN?

WE'LL BE HEADING OUT TO MEET UP WITH MASTER PAUL.

WE'RE READY.

HEEEY-YYYY! BIG BROTHER !!!

SHAKE

BY THE WAY, ABOUT THIS PENDANT... THE ONE THAT WAS IN THE BOX--

LET'S GO TO ASURA TOGETHER! TAKE ME WITH YOU!!

I WANT TO STAY WITH YOU, RUDEUS!

P.WOOMF

DUN-DUUUN

I SEE...

MAN, SHE GOT ATTACHED IN AN AWFUL HURRY...

AISHA...

LISTEN, AISHA.

THE HECK DOES SHE TAKE ME FOR?

SHE'LL BE ALL LIKE... BA-BOING!

I SUSPECT IT WILL BE BUT FOUR YEARS UNTIL SHE DEVELOPS THE TYPE OF BODY THAT RED-BLOODED MEN PREFER!!

PLEASE KEEP HER BY YOUR SIDE UNTIL THEN!!

POUT

THAT, AND...

IT'S NICE THAT YOU WANT TO BE WITH ME, BUT YOU'RE STILL SIX.

YOU SHOULD BE WITH YOUR PARENTS.

twiddle twiddle

LET ME GIVE YOU THIS.

!

YOU WANT YOUR MOM TO SPOIL YOU A LITTLE NOW, RIGHT?

WHISPER

IF YOU'VE GOT THIS, MAYBE I WON'T FEEL SO FAR AWAY.

THIS IS THE METAL BAND I USED ALL ACROSS THE DEMON CONTINENT.

rattle
rattle
rattle

LEAVE THE REST TO US BODY-GUARDS.

IF YOU WANT SAFE PASSAGE, TAKE THE CANYON THEY CALL THE "RED DRAGON'S MANDIBLE," OKAY?

UP AHEAD ARE THE RED DRAGON MOUNTAINS. BE CAREFUL, THERE REALLY ARE DRAGONS THERE.

YOU'RE HEADED FOR ASURA, AREN'T YOU?

HRRRN.

YOU WERE THAT HAPPY WE MATCHED?!

WHAT ?!

JUST WHEN WE ALL MATCHED EACH OTHER ...

YOU HAD TO GO AND GIVE YOURS AWAY.

OUR HEARTS ARE CONNECTED... OR SOMETHING...

EVEN IF WE, THE DEAD END, DON'T HAVE MATCHING STUFF...

S-SORRY! BUT LOOK!

WHOA, SHE'S POLITY!

I GUESS IT'S ALL RIGHT...

!!!

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND WOMEN AT ALL.

HMPH... YOU'RE STILL SO YOUNG.

WOW... I NEVER EVEN IMAGINED HE HAD AN INTEREST IN THAT KIND OF STUFF...!

MR. RUIJERD TALKED ABOUT WOMEN!

OMG, DID YOU HEAR THAT?!

HE'S A GOSSIP.

I SEE, I SEE.

PERHAPS YOU COULD BE PERSUADED TO SHARE A FEW PEARLS OF YOUR MASCULINE WISDOM WITH US, *HMMN?*

HMPH...

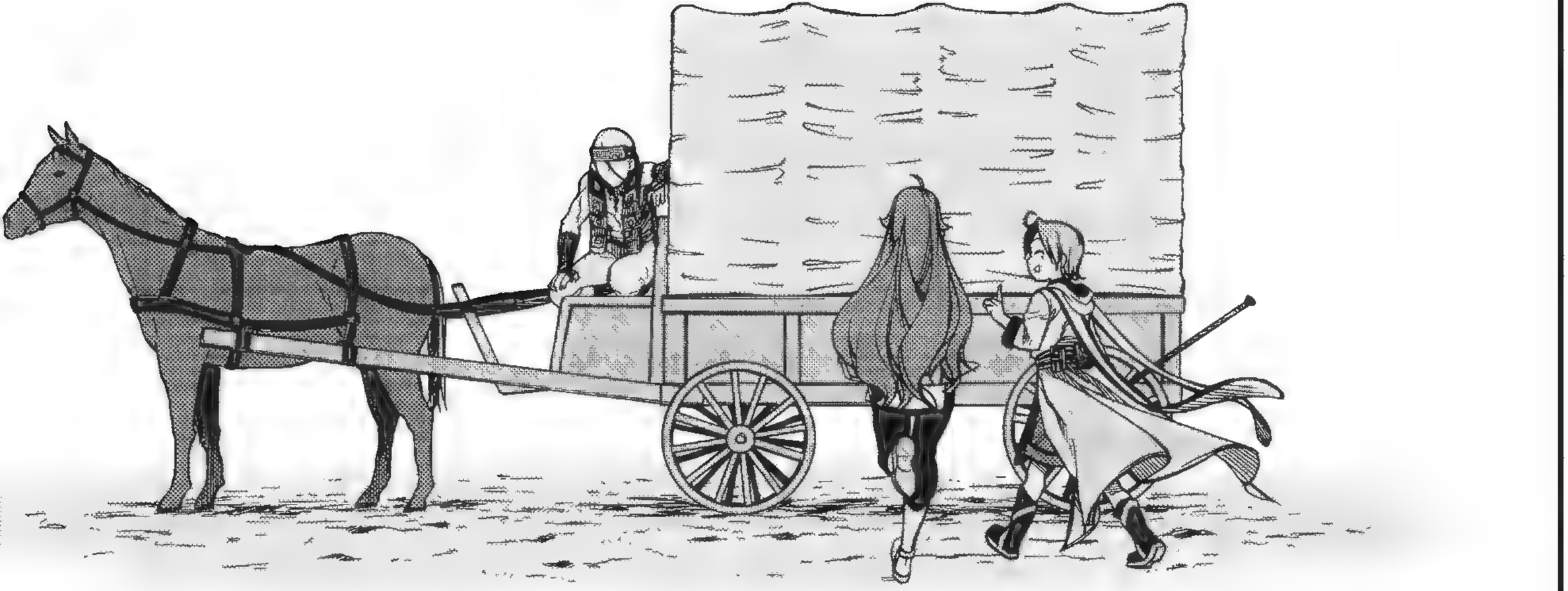
WE'RE HEADING OUT.

RUFFLE RUFFLE

ACK!

IT SURPRISED ME, TOO.

SO EVEN RUIJERD GETS EMBAR-RASSED!






FA-
FLAP

SO, THIS IS THE RED DRAGON'S MANDIBLE?

KA-TUNK

KA-TUNK

KA-TUNK

...!

THAT'S RIGHT.

IT TOOK A BIT OF TIME TO GET HERE, DIDN'T IT?

AFTER THIS, WE'LL BE IN ASURA...

THAT'S RIGHT, ISN'T IT? I'LL FINALLY BE BACK IN MY HOMELAND.

AND IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF YOU, MR. RUIJERD.

IT'S BEEN THREE YEARS SINCE I MET YOU, HASN'T IT...?

AND IT'S ALMOST TIME TO SAY GOODB--

MR. RUIJERD, WHAT WAS--

FLUTTER

GRAAWR!

GYAAAH!

GRAAA

AWR!

GRAAWR!

FA-FLAP

WHAT'S THAT...?


ZSH

WHOA... WHAT PRETTY BLACK HAIR. I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT.

YES, IT'S RARE, ISN'T IT?

SO THERE IS BLACK HAIR IN THIS WORLD.

BUT WHAT'S WITH THAT STRANGE MASK ...?

AND MORE IMPOR-TANTLY...

THAT MAN WITH THE PIERCING EYES ...?

WHO IS THAT?

KA-
TUNK

KA-
TUNK

KA-
TUNK

WHAT A STRANGE PAIR...

KA-
TUNK

KA-
TUNK

KA-
TUNK

KA-
TUNK

...

HMM ...?

YOU THERE. TELL ME. ARE YOU OF THE SUPERD?

WAIT...

GLARE...

I KNOW THAT FACE... ARE YOU RUIJERD SUPERDIA ?!

BOOM

I ALMOST DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU WITHOUT YOUR HAIR.

DO YOU KNOW THIS PERSON, RUIJE...

HE KNEW RUIJERD'S NAME, AND KNEW HE WAS A SUPERD JUST FROM A GLANCE. THAT MEANS...

THIS GUY ISN'T MUCH FOR PERSONAL SPACE, IS HE...?

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

SHIVER

SHIVER

SHIVER

THEY'RE BOTH SHAKING SO MUCH...

WHAT'S GOING ON?

SHIVER

SHIVER

SHIVER

WHO ARE YOU?

SHUDDER

AND THE LAST ONE IS...

I'LL JUST TAKE A LOOKSEE WITH MY DEMON EYE...

AH, I SEE. I CAN READ YOU LIKE A BOOK, RUIJERD.

KIIII...

HE ACTS LIKE HE KNOWS THEM... BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THEY'VE MET...?

STAY BACK, YOU TWO. DON'T MAKE A SINGLE MOVE.

YOU... HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?

KSHT

KSHT

KSHT

KSHT

IT SEEMS YOU FOUND THEM AFTER THEY WERE DISPLACED BY THE CALAMITY. AM I WRONG?

SO YOU'VE A SOFT SPOT FOR CHILDREN ...

AND YOU'RE GOING TO HELP THESE TWO FIND THEIR WAY HOME.

IT LOOKS LIKE HE KNOWS SOME-THING...

HE'S TOO BLURRY.

WHAT IS THIS...?! I CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT.

THE WAY HITOGAMI APPEARS IN MY DREAMS!

KIND OF LIKE...

HE'LL FIND OUT... EVEN-TUALLY.

SO IT'S FINE?

IT'LL HAVE TO BE. THERE'S NOTHING ELSE WE CAN DO.

WHAT A STRANGE PLACE FOR US TO MEET...BUT AS LONG AS YOU'RE WELL, IT DOESN'T MATTER.

Phew...

SORRY TO BOTHER YOU.

PLEASE, HOLD ON A SECOND !!

HEY!

MAYBE I SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT...

UH-OH...

SOMEHOW, I HAVE TO MAKE HIM TELL ME WHAT HE KNOWS...

UH...MY NAME IS RUDEUS GREYRAT...

WHO ARE YOU?

WHAT ARE YOU? OR RATHER ...

BUT I GET THE FEELING THIS GUY KNOWS SOMETHING IMPORTANT.

ONLY TWO DAUGHTERS. AND YET HERE YOU ARE.

HMM? THAT'S STRANGE.

PAUL ISN'T SUPPOSED TO HAVE A SON.

PAUL GREYRAT.

A GREYRAT...? THEN YOUR FATHER WOULD BE...?

HMM. I SUPPOSE THERE'S NO HARM IN TELLING YOU.

AND WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

...?

THAT IS MY NAME.

GLARE

I AM ORSTED.

ORSTED...? I'VE NEVER HEARD OF HIM.

FLINCH

I HAVEN'T MADE THEIR ACQUAINT-ANCE... YET. BUT... HMMN...

NO.

DO YOU KNOW THESE TWO?

TO BE HONEST, YOUR EYES ARE PRETTY INTIMI-DATING.

I'D RATHER LOOK SOMEWHERE ELSE, EVEN NOW.

INTER-ESTING...

YOU DO NOT TURN YOUR GAZE FROM MINE.

BUT... RUDEUS... PUT ANOTHER WAY, YOU ARE NOT *AFRAID* OF ME, AS THEY ARE.

YES, YES. I HEAR YOU.

YOU! DON'T COME ANY CLOSER!

THAT'S STRANGE... PERHAPS IT'S BECAUSE... NO, THAT'S NOT IT. I HAVE NO MEMORY OF YOU.

THIS'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE MET HIM, BUT THOSE THINGS HE SAID... "I HAVEN'T MADE THEIR ACQUAINT-ANCE... YET." "I HAVE NO MEMORY OF YOU."

WHAT COULD THAT MEAN?

SO? SPEAK. WHAT DO YOU WANT?

UH... UMM...

ACTUALLY. NOW THAT I THINK ON IT...

PERHAPS YOU HAVE HEARD THIS WORD BEFORE?

HITOGAMI.







無職転生
異世界行ったら本気だす

Mushoku Tensei:
Jobless
reincarnation

Re:ゼロ
Re: Life in a different world from zero
から始める異世界生活

Re:ZERO
-Starting Life in
Another World-

SHORT STORY COLLABORATION: *Mushoku Tensei* X *Re:ZERO —Starting Life in Another World—*



Chapter 1

By Nagatsuki Tappei

I was completely at a loss.

"Where am I…?"

I looked right, then left. It didn't matter; I didn't recognize anything. I didn't recognize the town, the faces, or even the feel of the place.

This was definitely an odd situation. A minute ago I'd been inside a mansion, and now all around me was the hustle and

bustle of a town I'd never seen before.

There's only one conclusion a person could make.

"I must have teleported."

I snapped my fingers as I said it. That's how I, Natsuki Subaru, rolled.

I guess you could say it was natural. After all, you wouldn't know it to look at me, but this wasn't my first time getting teleported someplace. I'd even experienced being summoned to another world.

It's not like I was going to panic and break down and cry. I wasn't that weak.

"Looks like I have my Summoned-to-Another-World Greed Set with me…"

The plastic bag was just the same as the first day I was summoned: snacks, cup noodles, and in my pocket, a flip-phone. Everything was so much like last time, I could have cried.

"I don't even get a single Excalibur… As if it'd be that easy. Right! I don't have time to be depressed. I have to get back ASAP!"

I closed the flip phone and girded my loins.

Maybe it was my unusual clothes, but I could feel the stab of people's eyes. It bothered me. I had to act, and act now.

I had to get back to the mansion. I made a promise.

"Emilia-tan is waiting for me."

A date with the girl of my dreams. There was no way I'd let anything get in the way of that! I made a vow in my heart, and raced across that unfamiliar town.

★★★

"Long story short, you're from another world."

Wow. Seriously.

That was how my conversation with that bland-faced guy went.

He was so average-looking that maybe I should have called him Bystander. But it seemed he was actually some god called Hitogami.

I was pretty surprised to hear him announce himself as a literal god, but I was probably dreaming, so I figured that was just how these things went.

"It's convenient that you're so resilient, Natsuki-kun. Or should I say Subaru-kun?"

If I had to pick one or the other, I'd go with Subaru.

"By the way, Mr. God, is it okay if I ask a few questions? Like why I'm here, in this world?"

"Hmm. That's a good question. To be honest, I don't know the answer myself."

"But you're a god, aren't you?"

"Even gods aren't all-knowing. But hey, I can tell you something that'll help. You do want to go back to the world you came from, don't you?"

"Well…that depends on which world you're talking about."

"The world you were in right before you came here. That one, you know? So, how about it?"

Naturally, I had to answer "yes."

"I made a promise, and I have a bunch of other

reasons to go back. So get me back there ASAP, Mr. God!"

"Well, you know, I'd love to do that, but I told you, didn't I? I can only tell you things. You're the one who has to take action."

I knew it wouldn't be that simple. "So, what do I have to do?"

"Don't get your knickers in a twist. First, why do you think I want to tell you something?"

"Is it because I keep disappearing into different worlds? Have the gods made some kind of mistake?"

"Nah, the Six-Faced World is out of my jurisdiction. I think I've said this before, but do you guys always mistrust gods when this sort of thing happens?"

"'You guys?' Let's put aside the issue of you grouping me together with everyone else…but where I'm from, we don't really see our God screwing up and sending people to other worlds, you know."

"I see. Then for now, let's just drop all our preconceived notions. I'm not like the other gods."

"Got it. By the way, could you explain why you said 'you guys' earlier?"

"Pretty observant, aren't you?"

"More like desperate. Is there someone else here from another world?"

"That answer relates to my previous question. To tell you the truth, I have the power to see people's futures."

"Oh, wow. I guess you are a god."

"And it looks like your future will change because

you're here. And that change isn't too convenient for me. The person I've got my eye on will die."

"Well, that's…that doesn't make me feel too good, either."

"Right? It's a big issue for both of us. To get you back to your old world, you need a certain magical tool. Activating it requires a humongous amount of magical power, you see. You get it now?"

"You mean the person with that humongous amount of magical power is going to die if something doesn't change?"

"Bingo! You catch on quick, don't you? So now that we're on the same page…you understand we have a mutual interest in this, right?"

"I want this person to help me get back to my old world. And you, Hitogami, don't want them to die… That about cover it?"

"Yes. Right now, said person is in the vicinity of the Red Dragon's Mandible… That's south of the town you're in. You should meet up with him there."

"Got it. By the way, what *is* that all-important magical tool?"

"Oh yeah, yeah. I forgot. The tool in question looks like this."

Lo and behold, a vision of the magical tool or whatever-it-was hovered in the sky. It looked kind of like a pendant with a chain attached. The design was so generic that it wasn't going to be easy to find.

"Your dream's almost over. For your sake and mine,

give it all you've got, okay?"

"You make it sound like it's not even your problem. Well, anyway, thanks for your help. I'll do my best. Whoa, whoa, hold on! What about that person I'm supposed to look for?"

"Oh, that's right. Right. His name is—"

★★★

"Good morning. I take it you slept well?" So said a middle-aged man with a peacock tattoo on his cheek.

He was wearing a rainbow-colored top, knee-length shorts, and sported a hairstyle that looked like a parabolic antenna—pretty intense.

"Mr. Subaru?"

"Oh, good morning, Mr. Auber. Thank you for letting me stay."

"What? It's nothing. Anyone would do the same," Auber said, out of consideration for me. His smile brimmed with human kindness. Quite the opposite of what you'd expect from him at first glance.

I met him the other day when I was wandering around town with nowhere to go. We hit it off, that's all. And he really liked my tracksuit and flip phone, so he let me sleep here.

Honestly, part of me kind of suspected he was just after my ass, but now that it was morning and my posterior was untouched, I felt bad for thinking that.

Even though I was unfortunate enough to cross worlds, I was still saved by the bonds of our common

humanity. I owe people so much.

"And what will you do now, Mr. Subaru? Last night you were troubled, and said you had nowhere to go, but today…"

"Well, I guess you can say that now, I do have somewhere to go. Have you heard of the Red Dragon's Mandible?" I asked timidly, while we had breakfast.

It was Auber's treat. If this Dragon's Mandible was a real place, then I wouldn't have to worry about whether the dream was just a figment of my imagination.

"That is the name of a canyon not far from here. It is near the border in the Red Dragon Mountains. Do you have business there?"

"So it does exist. That's a load off my back. I don't have business at the Mandible, but a town further south. I think a friend of a friend might be there, so…"

"Hmm. I see. Yes, indeed…"

Friend of a friend. That phrase was kind of disrespectful to the god and whoever this other person was, but I decided to let that slide for now.

Auber crossed his arms and nodded. I felt nervous—like maybe he had a problem with what I'd said. But there was never any reason to worry. "You should use a carriage if you're going south of Red Dragon's Mandible. Actually, as it happens, I have some business there as well."

It was obvious Mr. Auber was lying, and badly. He didn't want me to feel indebted to him, but he wanted to

take me there. Why?

"Mr. Subaru, you have entertained me with such fascinating stories. I think those tales will perhaps help hone my sword skills. You have saved my future. This is how I would repay you… So please, take it as such."

I thought I was going to cry.

What was with this guy? He looked like…well, you know…but he was such a great guy.

"I appreciate that, Mr. Auber. Seriously, thank you so much."

His words were the words of a swordsman, and I, another swordsman, decided to take them at face value. Although in my case, I only did a little kendo when I was in junior high.

Auber and I got in the carriage and left town, headed south towards Red Dragon's Mandible.

Before we passed through the canyon, I saw some red dragons flying over the peaks. Don't tell anyone, but it made me a little anxious.

"The Red Dragons are the ultimate monsters of the Central Continent. Do not act rashly."

"You couldn't defeat one either, Mr. Auber?"

"I would most likely be defeated by their strength in numbers," answered Auber, adjusting the four swords at his hip.

The ride was uneventful, and we passed the time with small talk until we reached our destination.

"This isn't much, but…"

Auber filled a leather bag with money and handed it

to me. Seriously, I couldn't thank that guy enough.

Of course, he offered to stay until I found that friend of a friend, but I turned him down.

He had already done too much for me. And I learned a lot from him while we were travelling.

I took all that to heart, and decided to do the next part myself.

"Until we meet again, Mr. Subaru. I pray for your good health," said Auber Corvette, the Emperor of the North, as he put his hand to his heart and acknowledged my resolve.

If my wish came true, then I would leave this world. But before that, I hoped I could write him a letter filled with gratitude.

That was what I was thinking when I headed out to find this friend of a friend.

"Now, where are you, Rudeus?"

★★★

"Halt," said some brown-haired kid.

He looked old enough to be in elementary school.

He had a kind face and a freckle under his left eye. He was pretty enough that I guessed someday the girls would love him.

The kid held a big staff, standing there at the entrance of an alley.

Thugs around me scattered, and I, on the ground in only my socks and undies, looked up at him in surprise. Everything else had been ripped from me.

"You totally saved me! Thanks! I owe you one! Let me say this again, grazie! Merci beaucoup!"

Undressed and half-naked, I bowed to the boy who saved me.

No, seriously, I legit thought I was going to die.

I parted ways with Auber and flew off feeling like my own man. Like I could really do this. That's when some thugs caught me in a back alley and took everything. Almost my life, too.

My bad luck struck again, and I seriously regretted trying to act like a big man. I never should have asked Auber to go.

"Oh God! Or like, God, I've been saved! But please tell me, in detail, how to save *myself* next time!"

I didn't care how embarrassing I was. Who'd care about that now? They'd already stripped me to my underwear in the middle of town. Living was the most important thing. No more muggings! Please!

"Umm, will you be all right?" said the boy, waiting for an opening in my joyous appreciation of life.

I bowed my head to him again.

"Seriously, you saved me. My name is Natsuki Subaru, and I have no money to thank you with, but let me say it, at least. Maybe a couple thousand times."

"Please don't say it a thousand times. There are a few things I'd like to ask you about, actually. Your appearance, for starters…"

"Oh, this? It might be an unusual look, but it's not anything too nice. Though actually, it's probably the

reason they targeted me…”

“It’s a tracksuit, right? That, and a bag from a mini-mart, and…” The boy blabbered suddenly, scratching his head. “Oh, damn! I don’t even know where to start!”

My brain froze when I figured out what he meant.

The boy took a deep breath.

“Maybe you’re from another world, too?”

★★★

“I’m Rudeus Greyrat.”

“Rudeus! *You’re* Rudeus?! The one Hitogami talked about?!”

“Urph.”

He made a face, didn’t he?!

“It’s nothing. It’s just…you brought up the name of that shady… So you’re mixed up with Hitogami, too?

“He was in my dreams. I get what you mean by shady, but to be honest, he saved me, you know?” I put my hands together in gratitude.

“By that gesture you just made, and your name… you’re Japanese, aren’t you?”

“Ooh, yes, yes! I’m a Japanese guy who’s been summoned to another world. Rudeus, you said ‘too,’ but you kinda look like a local…”

“In my case, I was reincarnated here. I’ve been living here since I was a baby.”

“So on this day, someone summoned from another world met someone reincarnated from another world…!”

“It’s so easy to talk to someone who understands…!

…Oops."

I guessed Rudeus thought he'd said too much, because he covered his mouth. I burst out laughing.

Summoned and reincarnated, we were both doing pretty well.

I guess it was pretty easy for two people from another world to get along. We understood each other's situation. It was almost like we were already best friends.

"So you need my magic and a magical tool to get back to your world…"

"I know it's rude to ask, but it looks like you're doing pretty well for yourself here. Maybe you don't really have time to deal with me…?"

"No, there's no issue with the magic thing. I mean, I just met someone from home, you know? We're on the same team. But I'm thinking that finding this magical tool won't be a walk in the park."

"I can't believe you'll do this for me…just like that!"

"Huh? If you saw someone from Japan in trouble in your world, could you ignore them? You couldn't, right?"

He laughed with a strangely pessimistic expression that didn't match his age.

His words made me think.

I mean, how about it? *Could* I do what Rudeus was doing? After all, I still owed Auber.

If nothing else, I hoped I could at least try to be like Rudeus.

★ ★ ★

I decided to head with him to the Asura Kingdom.

"If we go to Asura, I have friends that will help me out. Plus, there's a lot of people there, so it'll be easier to get some info about that magical tool. We'll just settle in there and find a way to get you home at our leisure."

That was Rudeus's plan, and I had no objections. In fact, the only one who did was the girl who was with him.

"Really, Rudeus, you're too good for your own good! You just keep on making life harder for yourself," said Eris, the pretty redhead, her brows askew.

This lover of his wouldn't sit quietly on the sidelines…or, at least, she was probably a candidate to be his lover someday. She certainly didn't look very happy about me barging in on their journey.

Rudeus talked it over with her, and suddenly I'd become a drifter who needed to get back to his family in Asura. I didn't know anything, couldn't do anything, and had no plans. Rudeus had taken pity on me—that's how he explained it.

"The ends justify the means, right?" said Rudeus.

When he laughed, he looked downright evil. I decided to keep that thought to myself.

Anyway, Eris and Ruijerd—the other person with them—eventually agreed. I was all good to join them

on their journey.

Ruijerd was pretty scary-looking, but he was nice to kids, and it looked like he'd decided I was one, too. I guess that's why he was so nice.

That's how I took full advantage of their giving souls.

I even started to think that things would keep going like this: we'd find the magical tool, and I'd be back in no time.

I wish I could curse how dumb I was. When will I ever learn? They say even death can't fix stupid. No one knows that more than me.

No matter how many times I "Return by Death," this part of my personality never goes away.

★★★

Once again, we passed the Red Dragon's Mandible—the place I passed through with Auber, but this time from the North side.

We'd just passed that canyon when we met up with him.

"Rudeus, do not move. Eris, Subaru, you, too," warned Ruijerd.

He sounded seriously worried. Eris's face went red and she shook all over.

Rudeus and I had no clue, and scrunched up our faces.

The man was tall with silver hair and golden eyes. I shouldn't talk, but he had an evil gaze.

There wasn't anything more to him, so why are they both acting like that?

"Interesting… You do not turn your gaze from mine," said the man, staring at us.

Real touching that he thought we were brave, but slowly, I started to get a bad feeling about it all. Rudeus seemed worried too.

"That's strange. I have no memory of ever having met you."

I've felt this way before. In that warehouse of stolen stuff, when I was negotiating with the "Bowel Hunter." And back then…things got nasty.

"Tell me. Have heard this word before? *Hitogami*."

"Yeah."

"Sure have."

Rudeus and I reflexively answered together.

It was a strange feeling of hopelessness and urgency that did it. That was how this guy made us feel. I just wanted to break the silence.

That was a mistake.

"Subaru!"

The voice felt like a blow to my shoulder.

"Ah!"

The man's hand pierced my chest like a spear.

A moment later, my brain registered the pain. Everything turned red. Blood and screams burst out of my throat.

It didn't just hurt. It was heart-rending.

The guy pierced Rudeus's chest too, and he

crumpled to the ground. It was an instantaneous death. At the same time, Rudeus's hand pushed my shoulder. That's why I didn't die right away.

But it was still fatal.

My head struck the hard ground. Hitogami's words belatedly passed through my mind. Rudeus was going to die.

This was it. I knew it.

I'd let it happen.

"…"

Far away, Ruijerd and Eris attacked the guy who'd killed us. They didn't have a chance.

The sounds of their battle reached me, but my eyes couldn't follow. As my world clouded over, I saw something fall from the man's sleeve.

A pendant. A pendant on a chain.

"Wha…?"

I tried to speak, but I couldn't even tell if air or blood came out.

But there was Rudeus's life, and the tool I needed to go back, and that guy was an obstacle between me and them both.

I looked at Rudeus, clinging to this memory.

I was stupid. Because of me, my friend would die with me. Even now, he was fighting death, trying to shield me.

If I had a chance in this world…

If there was a way for me to save my friend, then…

"I…will…save you."

The instant I said that, I lost all consciousness.

We died.

Then it began. The loop of another world…in another world.

Chapter 2

By Rifujin na Magonote

"Good morning. It seems you slept well."

I woke up to see a man with the peacock tattoo on his cheek. He wore a rainbow-colored top, knee-length shorts, and sported a hair style that looked like a parabolic antenna—pretty intense.

"Mr. Subaru?"

"Good morning…Mr. Auber."

I touched my chest with my right hand and wiped the sweat off my forehead with my left. I could feel the echo of my heart beating quickly.

"You do not seem well. Are you sick, perhaps?"

Dream? No, it wasn't a dream. I could still feel That Guy piercing my chest.

So, at that point, it was a "Return by Death," right?

I, Natsuki Subaru, had a special power.

To make a long story short, when I die, my life rewinds to a certain point, so I can redo things.

Even though I called it my power, it wasn't like I could pick where I started over. I'd be hard pressed to

say it was convenient.

This time, I didn't know what happened, much less what my goal was. But compared to the other times, it was easy to figure out.

To get back to my old world, I needed that magical tool.

And That Guy had it.

He would kill my friend, Rudeus, who I needed to activate the tool. Rudeus, who was nice to me, who was in a bind in another world, just like I was.

In short, if I could kill That Guy, the crazy one who came out of the blue and killed us while we were traveling, I could get home and Rudeus could stay alive.

He looked really strong, but he was alone. There were a million ways to do it.

We could take a strong bodyguard with us or something, right?

"What will you do now, Mr. Subaru? Last night you were troubled, and said you had nowhere to go, but today…"

"Hrmm, it's about that, but it's hard to explain…"

I raised my head, and there he was. This guy.

The Emperor of the North, Auber Corvette.

In contrast to his strict gaze, he had a cool nickname like "Emperor of the North." I knew someone called a "Sword Saint," and having a nickname like that usually meant you had the skills to back it up.

"Mr. Auber, you're good with swords, right?"

"Well now, as I am still in training, I hesitate to sing

my own praises, but I have indeed been granted the title Emperor of the North. It would not do for me to be overly modest. That is how it stands. Why do you ask?"

"I'm already in your debt for the night and the meal, and I'm embarrassed to say that I have something else to ask of you, but…"

"You want me to kill someone?"

"Yeah, that about sums it up."

"I do not wield this sword lightly."

"Please! The truth is: some guy is after my friend. He's going to kill him! And my friend's a really good guy, who helped me out just because we come from the same place!"

"Hmm… Well, in that case, I suppose it might be all right."

"So it's okay?"

"My teacher once said, 'Do not hold back your sword when indebted to another.' I suppose that applies to cases such as this."

I wanted to cry. Since I'd come to this world, I'd been blessed by fate and the bonds between people.

There was also that crazy guy who assaulted people by the side of the road though, so maybe that evened things out.

"I owe you."

And that's how I got the Emperor of the North, Auber Corvette, to join our party.

★★★

"There aren't many details. But to put it bluntly, that guy's going to kill you."

"Seriously? So let me get this straight, you've come here from another world, but originally you're from yet another world. And you've come all this way, with reinforcements, to save my life?! You're such a great guy!"

"Well, admittedly, there's also the bit about me wanting to make it home…"

As usual, Rudeus caught on quickly. After I explained the situation, he figured out the rest.

I suppose it might have been because he was reincarnated and I was summoned, but maybe Rudeus was just a friendly guy. I mean, people were usually more guarded.



"And you believe me? Just like that."

"Well, you know, after you've been reincarnated once…and I've already run into some beings who can see the future, so…"

That brought the hazy outline of Hitogami to mind.

He had a point. If beings like that existed, I guess you'd more easily believe in anything paranormal.

"So, what's the plan?"

"Overwhelm him with numbers, something like that."

Rudeus, Eris, Ruijerd, Auber and me. That was five people.

I was pretty much useless, but the other four, including Rudeus, were incredibly strong.

No matter how strong that man was, if so many super-strong people attacked him, he was going to go down.

"To put it simply, I'll blind him with this, and then everyone will rush in to attack. That's it."

I held my flip phone with a big grin on my face, but Rudeus had a thoughtful look.

"Hmm…"

"Something wrong?"

"No, let's go with that."

All the same, Rudeus seemed to have issues with the plan.

Well, I guess he would, right? From his point of view, That Guy was just a stranger. And it went against his morals to attack a stranger for no reason, even though that stranger would kill him. To be honest, I didn't like it very much either.

"Hey, I can't really explain it, but he's really dangerous. He'll attack you for no reason, all of a sudden. You might not like it, but believe me. Save me."

"No, I believe it. And even if you were lying about that part, it doesn't look like you're lying about wanting

to go back to your old world."

He was so kind.

"If you saw someone from Japan in trouble in your world, could you just ignore them? You couldn't, right?"

I'd heard that before, in the previous loop.

No matter how many times I get stuck in this loop, I think Rudeus would always say the same thing.

I just had to repay him for those words.

★★★

The Red Dragon's Mandible.

We ran into That Guy again.

The tall man with the silver hair and golden eyes.

As soon as he saw him, Ruijerd shivered with fierce vigilance and Eris grabbed her scabbard. Auber was affected, too. His eyes opened wide and sweat dribbled down his chin.

Only Rudeus and I were immune, so we acted according to the plan.

I stood in front of That Guy as he walked up to us, defenseless.

"Heyyy, you. Do you know what thiiis is?"

I turned on the flash on my flip phone.

Right after that, my arm flew off.

Literally flew off.

The flash didn't even make him blink. He didn't even step back. He just attacked his enemies. Us.

Before I even realized that my arm was gone, Ruijerd jumped on him.

The man caught Ruijerd's spear on the first thrust and punched him in the chin. Ruijerd crumpled to the ground.

Eris and Auber fought on.

It only took one shot for both of them.

Eris didn't even touch the man before she was blown away. Auber's first strike was deflected, and then he got stabbed through the chest.

Then, Rudeus finally used some magic.

He launched a boulder, big enough and fast enough to take off someone's head. It landed with an amazing sound.

But the man wasn't hurt at all.

No, there was the tiniest of injuries where it hit. Just a small wound, like a paper cut.

Right after that, Rudeus died. Stabbed through the chest, just like last time.

"Ah…ah…aaahh…!"

That was when my life ended, too. Just when the man got blurry, his arm was buried in my chest.

"Noooooo!"

Eris's scream echoed.

Why did I underestimate him? Why did I think it'd all work out…?

Why? How…?

Racked with guilt, I heard Auber's last words.

"It can't be…the Dragon God…Orsted…"

So. Now I knew That Guy's name.

★★★

"Damn…!"

I woke up for the third time, and pounded the bed with my fists.

Why was it so easy? Why did Rudeus just fall down dead like that?!

It had never been that easy, not even once. It was all my fault. I made the wrong decision.

I let Rudeus die again.

Auber, too. I let him die. It's my…

"You don't seem to be in a very good mood. Did you wet the bed?"

I was so absorbed in my self-pity that I didn't even notice Auber standing there.

"Mr. Auber… The Dragon God, Orsted. Do you know him? The one with silver hair and gold eyes."

"Of course! There isn't a swordsman alive who does not know the name. The Dragon God ranks second of the Seven Great Powers of the World. And even the existence of the one who ranks first is uncertain at the moment."

"Can you tell me how strong he is? Like, quantitatively?"

"My teacher was called the 'Northern God,' and ranks seventh among the Seven Great Powers. Descended from the Undying Demon folk, my teacher's body was almost indestructible, almost immortal. A hero who wielded a giant demon sword, itself near as

tall as a man. My teacher slayed mountains of gigantic beasts, however…against the Dragon God, even they were helpless as a babe in arms. The battle ended in my teacher's complete and utter defeat. As for other tales…"

The anecdotes about Orsted continued for a while.

And the more I heard, the more dangerous he became.

It was said that he could dodge attacks by reading the future.

It was said he could render attacks he could not dodge invalid.

It was said he'd mastered all the martial arts of this world.

It was said he could smash mountains.

It was said he was so ferocious that even the red dragons avoided crossing his path.

It seemed that all of the "Seven Great Powers of the World" weren't normal, but the top four were said to be in a class of their own.

Why was someone that big wandering around a place like that? What about checks and balances?!

Those anecdotes were enough to drive a person to curse.

Even if I'd been clueless, I cursed myself for trying to take on a monster with one cheap trick.

"But of course, Orsted is quite elusive. Someone you may never meet in your entire life. It is not certain how much of what is said is true."

From what I'd seen, it was all completely true.

Not only did he dodge all attacks, he also countered each one effectively. Auber was definitely skilled, but Eris and Ruijerd must be pretty strong, too. He blew them all away like nothing.

He was probably just as strong as the rumors said.

"Mr. Auber, if you were to fight him, how would you do it? If you couldn't afford to lose."

"Oh dear, dear. Fight? That's not very peaceful, is it?

"No, I'm just curious. I mean, every guy thinks about this stuff, right? How to beat a super-strong guy, that kind of thing."

I didn't know a thing about this world.

So I'd do best to start off by gathering information. Like how the swordsmen fought here, and what kind of decisions they made in battle. Only then could I start thinking about what I should do.

"You're not wrong. If it was me, I'd start by…"

Listening to Auber's ideas, I began to think of another strategy.

★★★

"Hmm…"

When I told him my plan, Rudeus raised his voice like he had an idea again.

Yes, again.

"Something wrong?"

"No, let's just go with that."

Same answer, but this time it bothered me a little. I ignored it the last time, but I'd also messed up. This

time, I wanted to know.

"No, no. There is something, right? Like the plan's missing something?! Or you're not happy about attacking someone who hasn't done anything?! Say it, please! We're best buds, aren't we?!"

"Since when are we best buds? No, I don't want to die either, you know. You only get one life. I'll fight with all I got."

"I totally agree with you there, but come on, what's eating you?"

"I just thought we could be a little more crazy."

"Crazy?"

"Well, for example…" *Mumble mumble*...

Mumble mumble... "Can you do that? I mean that's…"

The plan Rudeus put forward was wilder than I could have imagined.

Such a pipe dream that my common sense said it was impossible. I would never have come up with it.

But, if something like that were really possible, then then our chances of victory were high.

"That's amazing. What else can you expect from someone who was reincarnated from another world? It's practically cheating, isn't it?"

"Well, I don't know. It's not really cheating, but because I can do all this, I feel like I can make it. Don't you have something, Subaru? Oh yeah, you can predict the future, right?"

"I…well…I can't really explain the details."

It would probably be better to tell Rudeus about "Return by Death," and make our plans accordingly, but there was nothing I could do. Whenever I tried to tell someone, I was assaulted by so much pain that I didn't even want to remember it.

"Oh, that so?"

"Given the situation, I want to tell you everything, you know? I want to tell you, but there's a serious reason why I can't."

"That's okay. If you can't, and it's not because you don't want to, that's just how it is, right? I get it."

"Seriously, I think I'm going to cry."

Someone reincarnated into another world and someone summoned there. Because we had a similar knowledge base, there were some things we didn't have to say. Who could have known how much easier that would make things…

"If you're going to cry, do it when it's all over, brother."

I'm pretty sure Rudeus felt the same way.

★★★

The third time began with Rudeus's magic.

First, he made a wall at the entrance to the Red Dragon's Mandible with Earth magic.

He made another behind the unsuspecting Orsted. Having blocked his escape route, calamity ensued. I mean, there's no other way to describe it.

At the top of a cliff, Rudeus handled the various

magic. A fire so explosive, you'd think it was positively nuclear. Unthinkable amounts of water, so much that you'd need Noah's Ark, followed by freezing temperatures that approached absolute zero…and then, for the finale, a sheet of bedrock that fell on Orsted like a blanket.

Nothing could live through that. It was a total calamity.

All that would be left was retrieve the magical tool.

Even though we didn't defeat him mano-a-mano, Orsted had to be seriously injured…

"You're kidding, right…?"

He wasn't hurt at all.

Orsted tossed off the ice and bedrock, completely unharmed. He didn't even have a scratch on him.

The edges of his clothes were just a bit singed. That's all.

"Oh no no no no! R-r-retreat!"

Rudeus lost his cool and ran towards the mountains. That was some good acting…or…huh? Did he seriously lose his cool? Was the next part of the plan going to be okay? Oh well. Here went part two.

"Rudeus! The signal! The signal!"

"Oh, y-yeah!"

Rudeus shot magic into the sky.

It whooshed upwards, made a loud boom and a flash, and disappeared.

"Huh?!"

Orsted stopped. He looked cautiously up at the sky.

We expected him to be more hurt, but he moved so fast. I thought he'd just kill us, but we might just make it.

"What did you do?" Orsted asked.

"I thought," I said. "You know…you, I mean, even the red dragons avoid you. So why would you take a safe road? You took the Red Dragon's mandible, where even the dragon's won't attack!"

Here came the moment of truth. We had no way of knowing how it'd turn out.

But, based on what Auber said, if you flash lights or make loud noises in the area…

"SKREEEEE!"

A gigantic red shadow zoomed in with an ear-piercing shriek. I looked up, and there was a dragon. The ultimate monster of the Central continent. A whole flock of them rushed towards us.

"I see. You did indeed think," said Orsted, like he was supremely bored. "Too bad."

For a split second, he disappeared.

One of the dragons' heads exploded and fell to the ground. Red blood spurted from its body.

After that, the other dragons were visibly shaken.

"With one blow…?"

"Seriously…?"

All we could do was watch. According to the plan, we were supposed defend ourselves from the red dragons and give a signal, at which point Ruijerd and everyone else would go in to finish off Orsted. But we didn't have to. It wouldn't work at all.

All of the red dragons were annihilated in the blink of an eye.

And after that, we died, too.

★ ★ ★

It happened over and over again.

I think we tried everything.

We even took Auber and Ruijerd's advice and asked for help from the local Adventurer's Guild.

We tried poisoning and trapping him.

But we just couldn't win. Nothing fazed him.

All our plans ended in failure, and our deaths.

But through all of it, no matter what I said, Rudeus helped.

Even when I got stressed and said things I shouldn't have, he said:

"If you saw someone from Japan in trouble in your world, could you just ignore them? You couldn't, right?"

Always with a wry grin, but never like he didn't want to help.

Every time we tried, I wanted Rudeus to live even more.

But I didn't know what to do.

I couldn't find the answer. I didn't know it.

Everything seemed bleak and emotionless. And I kept going through the loop, over and over again.

The Crossover Continues Next Time!

Re:ZERO -Starting Life in Another World- © Tappei Nagatsuki
Illustrations by: Yuka Fujikawa, Character Designs by: Shinichirou Otsuka

CROSSOVER BONUS! MEOW!

PLEASE DON'T KILL ME, MR. ORSTED!

COULD YOU TAKE A LOOK AT THIS?

HEY YOU, OVER THERE!

Subaru's Endless Challenge

HMM...

THAT MEANS...

THAT'S HOW IT WENT. NO MATTER WHAT I DID, IT WAS USELESS.

SO YOU'RE GOING TO BUY ONE, RIGHT?!

JUST BY WEARING IT, YOU'LL BE SAFE AT HOME, YOUR BUSINESS VENTURES WILL BOOM, AND EVERYTHING WILL GO YOUR WAY!

THIS IS HUGE ON THE STREETS. IT'S CALLED A SWEAT-SHIRT, MY DUDE!

WE CALL IT: "OPERATION: NORTH WIND AND SUN"!

NEW PLAN: HAVE HIM TAKE OFF HIS CLOTHES SO WE CAN LOOK FOR THE MAGICAL TOOL!

HMM. ONLY A MESSENGER FROM HITOGAMI WOULD TRY TO SELL ME SUCH SUSPECT CLOTHING.

I'LL KILL YOU.

Back to the drawing board...

Re:ZERO – Making Dinner in Another World! (Girls' Version)



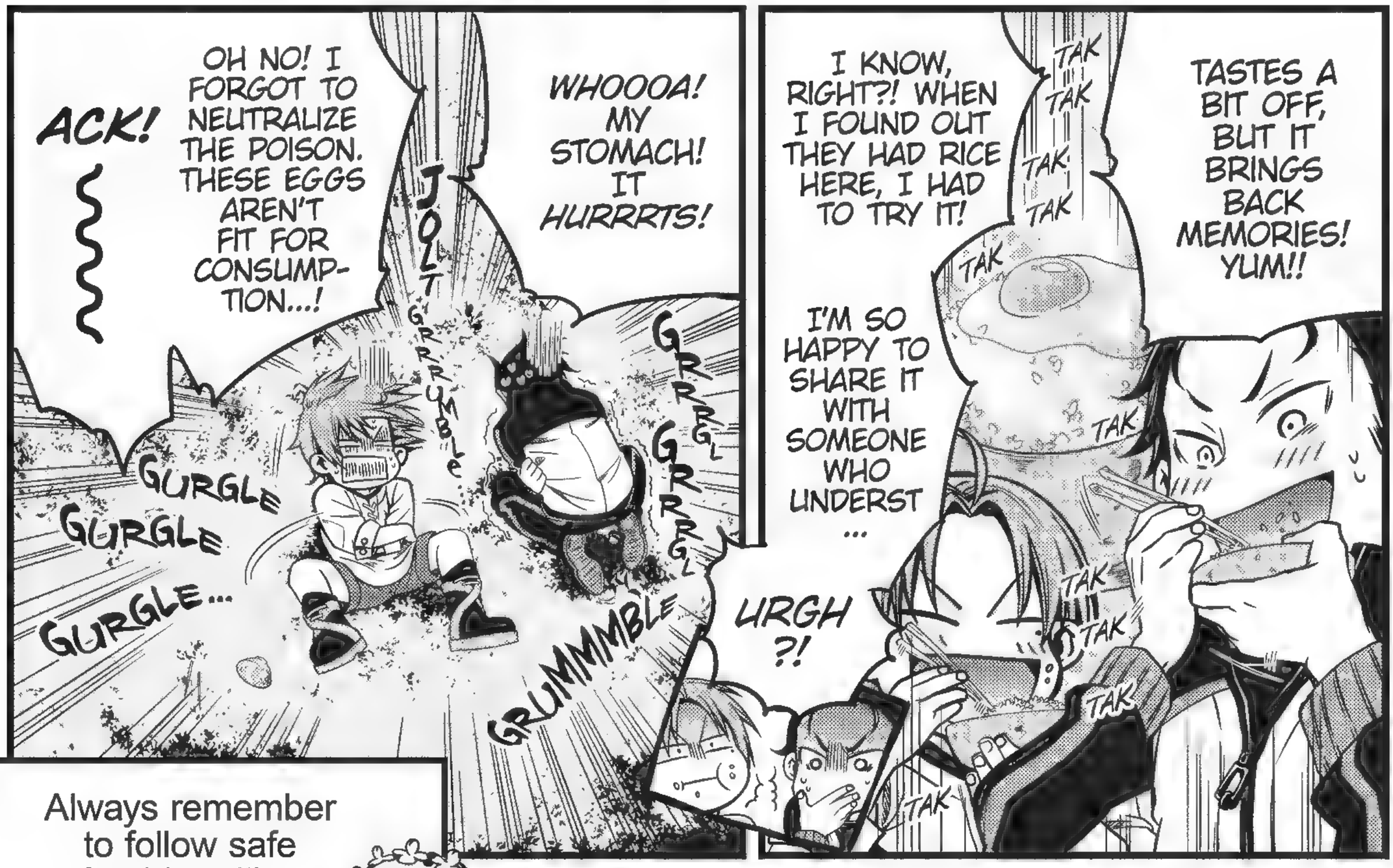
Mushoku Tensei: jobless reincarnation x
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Illustrations by: Yuka Fujikawa, Character Designs by: Shinichirou Otsuka

Re:ZERO – Making Dinner in Another World! (Boys' Version)







Always remember to follow safe food-handling practices.



Mushoku Tensei: jobless reincarnation x
Re:ZERO –Starting Life in Another World–

Re:ZERO -Starting Life in Another World- © Tappei Nagatsuki
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I LOVE YOU...!

LOOK FOR VOLUME 10 OF THE MANGA, COMING SOON!

THE ORIGINAL *MUSHOKU TENSEI* LIGHT NOVEL SERIES IS AVAILABLE NOW FROM SEVEN SEAS ENTERTAINMENT!

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Mushoku Tensei

jobless reincarnation volume 9

story by **RIFUJIN NA MAGONOTE** / art by **YUKA FUJIKAWA** / character design by **SHIROTAKA**

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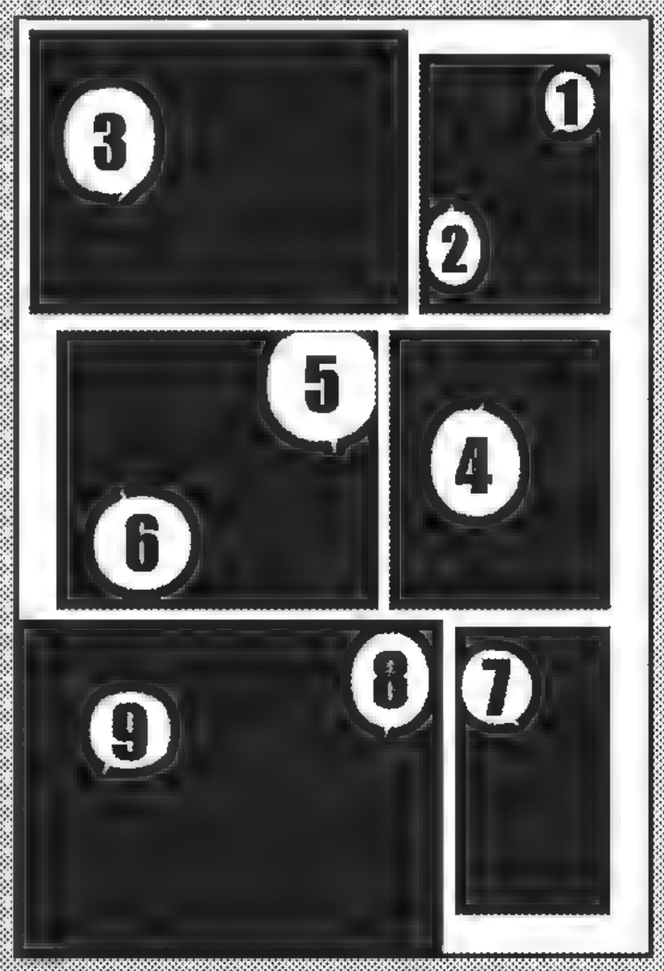
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READING DIRECTIONS

This book reads from ***right to left***, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get the hang of it! Have fun!!



After a magical disaster saw his family thrown all across the world, Rudeus is determined to bring them all back together. The next step just might involve storming a castle, and Rudeus isn't about to back down from the challenge. But how will his half-sister Aisha feel about a reunion with a brother who never came for her—a brother she's never met?

A BROTHER DARES



TEEN

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CHAPTER 47

TURNING POINT II — END

"HITOGAMI."

THIS GUY...

HE KEEPS SAYING ALL THIS WEIRD STUFF, BUT...

GULP...

SQUEEZE

I SEE.

I SEE...!

DOON

SOMEONE CALLED HITOGAMI APPEARED IN MY DREAMS, AND HE--

HE'S JUST LIKE ME!

I HAVE!

HE MUST BE DOING STUFF BASED ON WHAT HITOGAMI'S TOLD HIM!!

ドンドンドン!!

THUD

YOU ARE IN MY WAY.

RUIJERD SUPERDIA ...

RUDEUS! YOU HAVE TO RUN!!

GRSH GRSH GRSH GRSH GRSH GRSH

GWAAM

GWUNK WHOOSH

ROW

ROW

SKRNCH

SORRY ABOUT THIS, RUIJERD.

WHAT?

CRACK

BUT IT SEEMS THIS ONE IS MY ENEMY.

HE'S A MESSENGER OF HITOGAMI.

I MUST KILL HIM.

HITOGAMI'S MESSENGER?!

WHAT? I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT!

I'VE BEEN FRAMED!

QUINT-
ESSENCE!


“Flow.”

ERIS BOREAS GREYRAT...

SHWIP

I ALWAYS THOUGHT YOU SHOWED PROMISE.

YOUR SWORDS-MANSHIP HAS GREATLY IMPROVED.

WHAT ...?

THWUD

BUT YOU'RE NO MASTER.

DAAN

HHF
SKSHHHP

UH...
UNNH...

AH...
AAAH...

LEER

DOOON

KRIK

KRAK

ACK!

HURK!

KOFF ...!

SPLOTCH

SPLOTCH

KOFF!

GRIN...

REMEMBER THIS. THE BEST WAY TO SLAY A MAGICIAN IS TO CRUSH THEIR LUNGS.

PWIK

PWIK

PWIK

TELL THIS TO HITOGAMI.

THE ONE WHO KILLS HIM...WILL BE THE DRAGON GOD, ORSTED!

NOW DIE. AND WHEN YOU ARE GONE...

GRIN...

OH?

GNOOM

PLIP...

TO THINK YOU COULD HARM *MY* BODY WITH SUCH A MAGIC...

WAS THAT THE STONE CANNON, THEN?

IT'S SOME POWER, ISN'T IT?

KRI

NOT EVEN STONE CANNON COULD PUT MORE THAN A SCRATCH ON HIM...!

DID YOU GAIN THAT POWER FROM HITOGAMI? WHAT ELSE DID HE GIVE YOU?

IT'S NO GOOD.

YOUR LUNGS ARE CRUSHED.

WAS IT VOICELESS MAGIC, THEN?

WHY DON'T YOU HEAL YOUR LUNGS WITH VOICELESS MAGIC?

WHAT'S WRONG?

RIGHT NOW, IN THIS MOMENT...

IF STONE CANNON ISN'T ENOUGH, THEN...

I... CAN'T DO VOICELESS HEALING MAGIC...

Sigh...

CLAP

ENOUGH.

I'LL USE HEAT AND EXPLOSIVE POWER...!!!

FWOAAR

LET'S TRY FIRE!

Disturb Magic.

BWA-SHANK

PSHEW

MY SPELL WON'T TAKE SHAPE...!

PSHEW

PSHEW

THE MAGIC I'D GATHERED IN MY RIGHT HAND...

IT'S... DISTORTED ?!

HWOOSH...

IF MY RIGHT HAND DOESN'T WORK, THEN MY LEFT...

HMM? YOU CAN STILL USE MAGIC?

THEN WHY DON'T YOU HEAL YOUR LUNGS?

SKSH...

DON'T GET UP...

RUDEUS...!

NO, ERIS...

SNAP

FINE.

OPEN! GATE OF DRAGONS PAST!

KREEEE

ZU

ZU

...!

IT IS OVER.

Hyuuuu

CLOP

CLOP

KRISH

HWOOOOOOSH!

IT'S ALL BEING SUCKED AWAY...!

WH... WHAT IS THIS? MY MAGIC...



NOOO...

N...

NUH...

chatter

chatter chatter

N...

RUDEEHUUS!

SPLUT

NO.

NO...!

HUSH!!

NO!

HUSH!!

HUSH!!

HUSH!!

HUSH!!

NGH...

GRGH...

HE'S... HE'S NOT BREATHING...!

Heavenly ...

PLURP

UNGH...

WHAT DO I DO? THE BLOOD WON'T STOP...!

Heal...!

Healing...!

NO!

RUDEUS!

DON'T GO!

DON'T LEAVE ME LIKE THIS!

NOOOO!

Y... YES...

COME, NANAHOSHI. WE ARE LEAVING.

WAAAH!

AAAAAH!

I AM SORRY, ERIS BOREAS GREYRAT. BUT YOU WILL UNDER-STAND SOMEDAY.

WAS HE IMPORTANT TO YOU?

SOME-BODY SAVE HIM!!!

SOME-BODY! ANYBODY! I DON'T CARE WHO!

PLEASE, SAVE RUDEUS !!

The story continues in Volume 10!